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A photograph of two men sitting on a light-colored sofa in a bright room with large windows. The man on the left, who is bald and wearing a light grey button-down shirt, is holding a silver tablet and looking at it. The man on the right, with dark hair and wearing a red button-down shirt, is leaning over his shoulder, looking at the tablet. He is also holding a dark book in his left hand. A colorful patterned pillow is on the sofa to the right.

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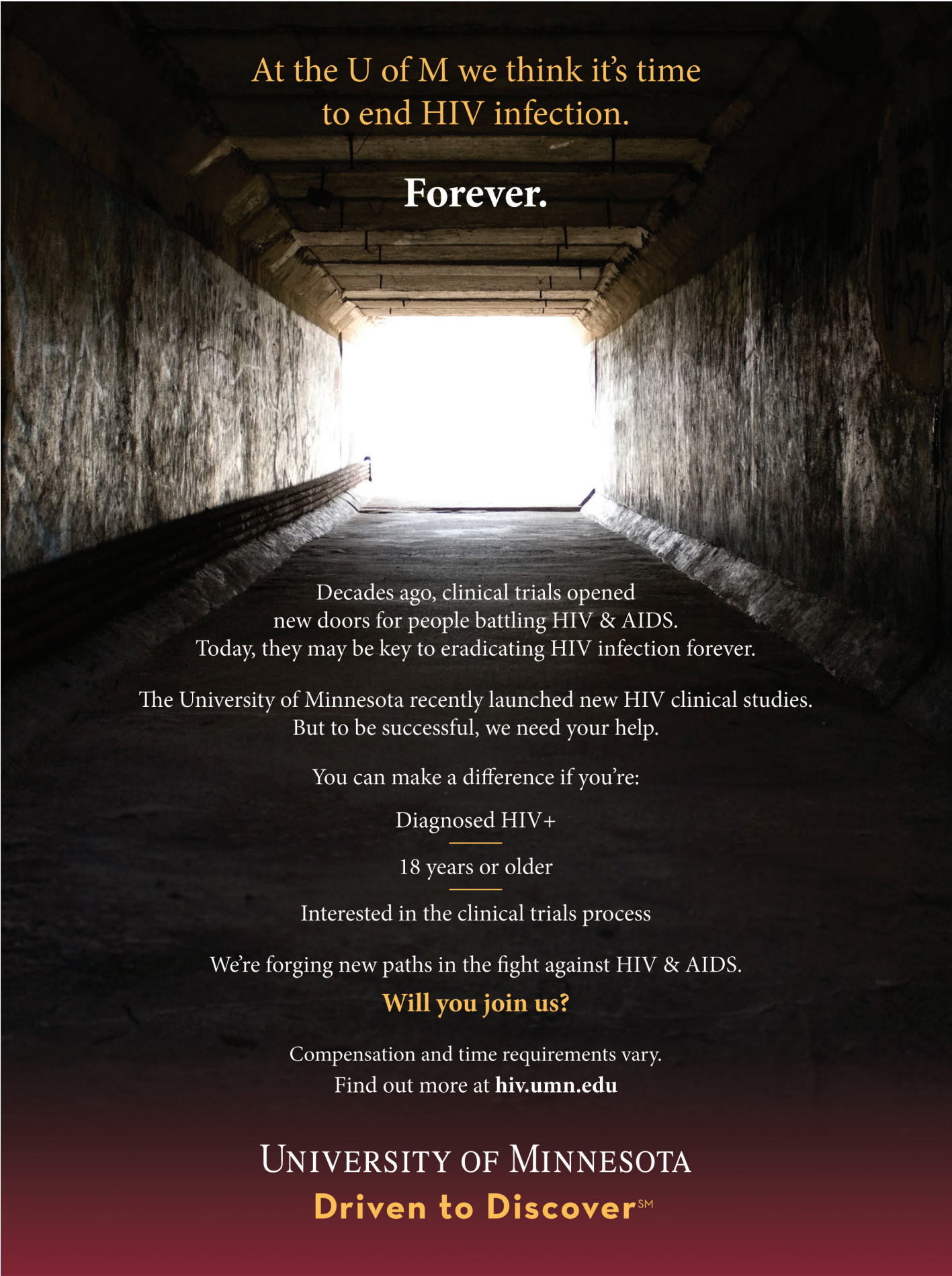
The recent Supreme Court ruling on the Defense of Marriage Act led Greg and Peter to take a serious look at their investment planning needs. The rapidly changing legal landscape meant it was crucial that they worked with someone who was knowledgeable, so they turned to Wells Fargo Advisors. Our Financial Advisors who have the Accredited Domestic Partnership AdvisorSM (ADPA[®]) designation are well-versed on the current set of challenges, so Greg and Peter walked away with a solid plan and confidence in the future.

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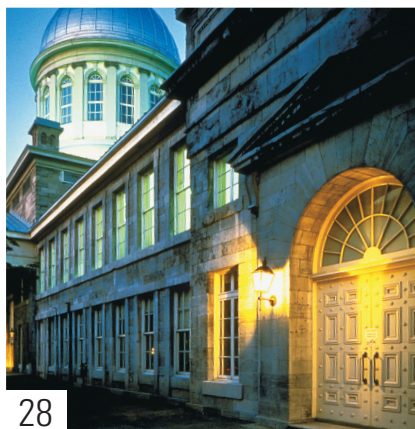
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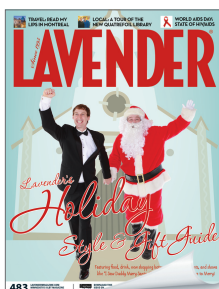
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ON THE COVER

Give the gift of laughter: *I Saw Daddy Marry Santa Claus* at the Brave New Workshop celebrates the "Freedom to Merry" in our community. Cover designed in collaboration with the Brave New Workshop, photographer Dani Werner, and Mike Hnida

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The Easy Season

'Tis the season for hustle and bustle. I look forward to the holidays with both excitement and dread, knowing that it'll be all about the go, go, go on top of the snow, snow, snow. Rather than get worked up into an eggnog lather over it, I encourage everyone to find the "easy button" and press it. Whether it's a Minnesotan thing, a Scandinavian thing, a Lutheran thing, a woman thing, or a "I CAN DO IT MYSELF" thing, I had been hardwired to think that the more difficult a task I accomplish, the more important it must have been. It's not valuable if I didn't kill myself to do it...and the holidays have been the prime season for overextending myself. Somehow, though, I've gotten past that fallacy and figured out that I need some things to be easy. And they're good things. Not any less important or valuable or crucial to anyone, these easy-button solutions are a part of every day of my life, not just the holiday season.

My family is very utilitarian and organized in its gift giving (see previous Lutheran/Scandinavian remark). We write lists and the lists include links to exactly what we want (okay...mine does...I include links because I like to be clear in my communication). If someone tells you what they want and it's within your means to get it, don't put yourself through the wringer over it—get it. There's no award for never referring to the wish list when buying gifts...or there shouldn't be. Don't read into things, just read the lists. Easy.

Because I'm single and live alone, I have a whole lot of freedom but not a whole lot of options for shopping. I can stop here and there, go gallivanting to and fro, and take as long as I want to pick up the perfect gifts from the lists that have been given to me, but the "options" part is all about the hauling. Sure, I could get oversized items for everyone, but that means that I'll have to haul them, too. My stuff, my dog's gear, the leash (and the dog attached to it), the snow, the ice, the not-gonna-happen. I'll get little trinkets from some of the local stores as stocking stuffers and host presents because they're easy to carry, but the rest has to ship itself. This is where Amazon comes in. I love Amazon and am a member of the Amazon Prime program that means free two-day shipping for all qualifying products...which, especially at the holidays, pays for the membership fee over and over. I'll figure out where I'll be for the event, have the gifts shipped there, and arrive early enough to unpack and wrap them. Last year, I even had

the wrapping paper shipped to my parents' house. Really. (And, if my dad shakes the big box and actually figures out that it's the Husqvarna chainsaw helmet with face shield from his list, he deserves to figure it out.) You won't hear me say, "Bah, humbug!" over that. Easy.

Food is a basic component of the holidays. I embrace cooking and baking, when I have time. Time is usually the limiting factor. Cooking and baking are putzy activities that involve prep, execution, and clean-up...and yield such tasty rewards. But, it's all about knowing my limits. Finding the "easy" when I need to. If there's a potluck party and I know I've got a day full of meetings, I won't be bringing a home-made pie; I'll pick up crusty bread and some cheese and olives. I kid you not, for a recent casual get-together, I picked up a very popular dish to pass via the Taco Bell Drive-Thru: a 12-pack of tacos that were more tasty than tacky. If I know I've got three potlucks in a short period of time, I'll make a monster, triple-batch of my cheeseball and split it into three, one for each shindig. Easy.

In a sea of other cookies and confections, dried fruit sprinkled on melted white chocolate that hardens to be broken into pieces of bark are a visual and literal treat. Choosing the Caramel Puffcorn recipe on the back of the Old Dutch Puffcorn bag is the fastest way to get myself on next year's invitation list. I love getting involved in a cookie exchange for which I make 15 dozen of the same cookie (one list of ingredients, one set of dirty dishes, countless loads of trays into the oven) and get back 14 dozen different varieties of sweets that I'd never have time (or ingredients) to make. Sure, even my "easy" solutions might sound difficult to people who don't cook or bake, but there's a solution to most any situation out there, even if it's picking up a bag of candy to pass. Yum. Easy.

Most of all, we need to take it easy on ourselves. Before I allowed for the possibility that things can go off-course, off-list, and be bought off-the-bakery-shelf, the holidays (and my life) were prone to more martyrdom than merriment. I can do without that drama. Easy.

Happy Holidays to you and yours.

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Tips For The Holiday Season

Christians dining out are reported justifying stiffing wait-staff by declaring their church tithing excuses them, leaving tracts or even a faux \$10 bill that opens into religious cant, in lieu of tips. Others refuse to tip anyone perceived as gay.

When Dayna Morales, server at the Gallop Asian Bistro in Bridgewater, New Jersey, introduced herself to a family, the mom remarked, "Oh I thought you were gonna say your name is *Dan*. You sure surprised us!" At the end of their \$93.55 meal, she scribbled on the tab, "Sorry I cannot tip because I do not agree with your lifestyle & the way you live your life."

Another server in Kansas City, reported *The Raw Story*, was first thanked for "excellent" service, then: "We cannot in good conscience tip you, for your homosexual lifestyle is an affront to GOD. Queers do not share in the wealth of GOD, and you will not share in ours. We hope you will see the tip your queer choices made you lose out on . . . It is never too late for GOD's love, but none shall be spared for queers. May GOD have mercy on you."

Jesus preached, "Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets," while God himself told Moses, "You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord."

At what level of denial do these non-tippers operate? There's something disingenuous about accepting food from gay hands then refusing on "moral" grounds to pay for the service. With their keenly-honed gaydar, they could request a different server before ordering, though that would publicly brand them as the bigots they are.

Even Chick Publications (www.chick.com), longtime provider of cartoon gospel tracts, doesn't advocate doing a bunk but explains, "When you leave a good tip and a tract at a restaurant, you don't just reach one person . . . it usually gets circulated until everyone gets the message."

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BLACK AND BLUE BALL

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eagleBOLTbar • 515 Washington Ave. S.
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Thursday, December 5 • 5:30-8pm
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The annual holiday edition of First Thursdays is always a festive event. Join Lavender Magazine, HRC Twin Cities, Project 515, OutFront MN, Twin Cities Gay Men's Chorus, PFund, North Country Bears, Minneapolis Movie Bears, Twin Cities Quorum, and Prime Timers MSP as we celebrate the holiday season. Admission is FREE – No RSVP needed. There's also no dress code, so come as you are. The evening features complimentary appetizers, cash bar with featured Ketel One cocktails, and prize registrations. There's plenty of parking available, including the Calhoun Beach Club Apartments ramp on Thomas Ave. Visit lavendermagazine.com/calendar/lavenders-first-thursdays/ or search "Lavender's December First Thursday" on Facebook for more information.

MINNESOTA AIDS PROJECT'S 30TH ANNIVERSARY Thursday, December 5 • 6-8pm

Minnesota Central Library • Cargill Hall Gallery
300 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis

MAP will be celebrating 30 years of progress in an art gallery specifically curated to highlight MAP's 30 years, and presenting the future direction of the organization. Guest speakers include Michael Kaplan, President & CEO of AIDS United; Senator Jeff Hayden, Deputy Majority Leader, Minnesota State Senate; and Bill Tiedemann, Executive Director, Minnesota AIDS Project. Refreshments and light hors d'oeuvres will be provided. Suggested contribution: \$100/\$250/\$500/\$1,000. Visit www.mnaimsproject.org.

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Hillcrest Center Theater
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This charming and magical play for the whole family explores the cultural traditions of Hanukkah and the all-encompassing themes of kindness and friendship. It's a tale of a boy and how the magic dreidels he receives from a goblin help him learn the warm lessons of the Jewish "Festival of Lights." *The Magic Dreidels* was originally commissioned by and received its world premiere at MJTC in 2000. Tickets are \$17. Visit mn-jewishtheatre.org for tickets and more information.

SWEET & SOUR RICHFIELD – MADE IN CHINA

Friday, December 6 – Sunday, December 22
Illusion Theater • 528 Hennepin Ave., Minneapolis
Sweet & Sour Richfield – Made In China! finds Miss Richfield getting ready to take one final Greyhound Bus trip, as the people of Richfield are cutting expenses. Always up for new adventures, Miss R is exploring cultures that need her ministry of talent and beauty, so she may end up on overseas bus trip! With this all-new production, Miss R joyously romps across the globe with colorful videos, twisted sing-a-longs, and a healthy heap of audience interaction. Tickets are \$30-\$40. Visit

illusiontheater.org for tickets and more information.

A MIDNIGHT QUEER HOLIDAY CONCERT December 6 & 7

First Universalist Church
3400 Dupont Ave. S., Minneapolis

Come home with One Voice and ignite your winter holidays with an unexpected and eclectic celebration of music and poetry. This non-traditional holiday concert features LGBT spoken word artist Tish Jones, and poets Kate Lynn Hibbard and Elijah Rose. Enjoy music from Chanukah, Kwanza, Solstice, the Hindu festival of lights, Christmas, and Mawlid an-Nabi (Sufi birth of Mohammed). With community singers and plenty of audience sing-along carols, we offer a holiday concert like no other and a musical celebration you won't soon forget. Tickets are \$20-\$25 and \$15 for students and seniors. Visit ovmc.org for tickets and more information.

SMITTEN KITTEN'S 5TH ANNUAL EROTICART: A LOCAL ART & CRAFTS FAIR

Friday, December 6 - Saturday, January 4

From practical, handmade, sex supplies to erotic and expressive fine art, the Smitten Kitten will showcase local talents during their EroticArt Fair. The month long event kicks off on December 6 when Smitten Kitten will be transformed into an interactive gallery for EroticArt's Opening Event. Guests can expect an evening filled with engaging and inspiring art, refreshments, conversations with the artisans and artists, as well as the opportunity to take home some irresistible local works. Smitten Kitten's staff of sex educators will also be facilitating crafty activities for attendees and answering customer questions as usual. Visit smittenkittenonline.com for more information.

LAVENDER'S OUT AT THE MOVIES

Thursday, December 12 • 7pm
St. Anthony Main Theatre
115 Main St. SE, Minneapolis

Out at the Movies is back, and we'll be showing *Southern Baptist Sissies*, the new release from Del Shores, the creator of *Sordid Lives*. *Southern Baptist Sissies* is the story of four gay boys who grew up in the Southern Baptist church and the different journey each one takes in coming to terms with their own homosexuality versus what they were taught by the church. Tickets are \$10 in advance and \$15 at the door. Ticket sales benefit Minneapolis Movie Bears and Out Twin Cities Film Festival. Search "Lavender's Out at the Movies" on Facebook for tickets and more information.

TWIN CITIES GAY MEN'S CHORUS

HOLIDAY CONCERT - STAR OF WONDER
Friday, December 13 – Sunday, December 15
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2128 4th St. S., Minneapolis
Twin Cities Gay Men's Chorus celebrates the wonder of the season with special guest Matt Alber! After performing as part of the renowned ensemble Chanticleer, Matt has pursued more contemporary projects and made a name for himself with his hit "End of the World." The TCGMC will be working with Matt, San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus and the Gay Men's Chorus of Washington, D.C. to create arrangements of favorite holiday songs especially for Matt and chorus! Tickets are \$25-\$53. Visit tickets.umn.edu to purchase your tickets. □



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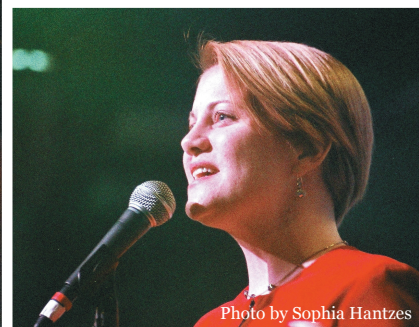
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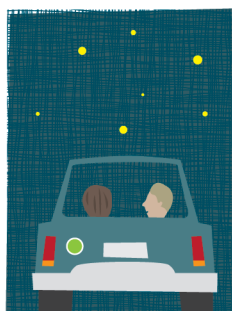
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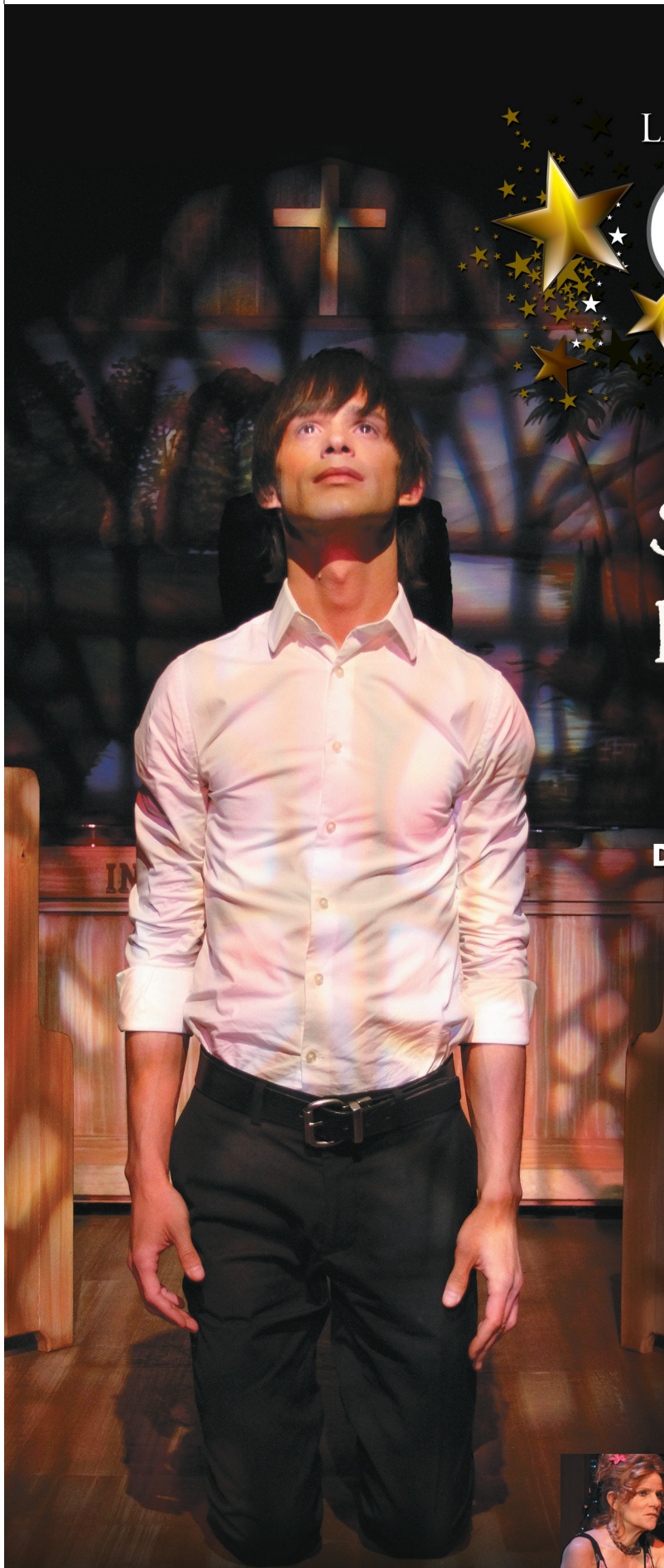
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PRESENTS

SOUTHERN BAPTIST *Sissies*

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Thursday, December 12

Doors open: 6:45 PM • Movie Begins: 7:30 PM

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Thirty Years of Hope: The Minnesota AIDS Project. Artwork by artist Melanie Schumacher

THIRTY YEARS OF HOPE: THE MINNESOTA AIDS PROJECT

Through Dec. 31

Hennepin County Central Library's Cargill Hall
300 Nicollet Mall, Mpls.

www.hclib.org

For the past 30 years, Minnesota AIDS Project has seen the evolving way in which HIV/AIDS has come to be dealt with. In the early years, the panic was absolutely palpable. Misinformation and disinformation ran rampant. Stigma was the rule. Fear seemed to have worked its way into the very marrow of human existence. However, over time and through diligent activism, HIV/AIDS has not only become manageable but has also become a platform from which wondrous creativity has sprung and has been an indicator of problems in the nation's health care system that have only relatively recently come to be fully recognized by the general public. It was HIV/AIDS activists who really got the ball rolling for that awareness starting in the 1980s.

At the Cargill Gallery at the Minneapolis Central Library, the *Thirty Years of Hope* visual art exhibit connects us with the streams of consciousness of the HIV/AIDS era. The range of art assembled by Minnesota AIDS Project and Altered Esthetics is remarkable and, when contemplated on, it is surely an expansive and psychologically healing experience for anyone, whether they have HIV/AIDS or not. It sounds cliché but *Thirty Years* truly is a reflection of the triumph of the human spirit with universal appeal.

With Janelle Doyle's *HOPE* you feel as if you could fly right into the image and be suspended in the air yourself, along with the two free-floating red human forms. The redness can't help but bring to mind the blood of those with HIV/AIDS. In a defiantly joyous spirit, Doyle celebrates how we don't have to accept the enshrined earthbound negativity so many people are dragged down to. It's a matter of letting go.

James Powell's sketches are reminiscent of the cartoon style of the iconic Ralph Bakshi. The fact and reality of children living with HIV/AIDS is sweetly and touchingly rendered. The wide-eyed

innocence so lovingly portrayed in Powell's pieces is also stunning. As with Doyle, they are facing the universe head on. They will not be dragged down. They expect the universe to support them and we somehow just know it will.

However, there are some pieces that are admirably dark and it's important to bear in mind that facing darkness is part of healing and the reclaiming one's personal power and will. Jessica Barnd's *Fire* is part of a grouping that seems to symbolize the abyss that persons with HIV/AIDS face when grappling with their diagnosis. There's a harrowing edge to Barnd's work in which a unisex figure tries to protect her/his back as if scratching some painful internalized itch. The other arm reaches out to some unseen threatening external force. The figure seems to be on his/her way to imploding. The effect is visceral and arresting.

Melissa F. Kaelin's majestic *Sweet Raspberry Sunset* is softly optimistic. Blackened natural objects on the earth's surface stand with persevering will and hope as if calling on the universe, beguilingly and colorfully represented by the sky itself. The earthbound seem to be reaching out for the healing power of a splendid, as opposed to

an indifferent cosmos. In Kaelin's view, it seems to be a cosmos where we can faithfully turn to at those times when we feel insignificant and hopeless. Her universe seems to have an overwhelming possibility so powerful that our humanness doesn't quite yet have the ability to comprehend it. An invocation to cosmic healing energies that are hopefully finally returning to our ailing planet. Good news!

In Melanie Schumacher's *Swoon*, dots of paint comprise gyrating, curving, sensual, and healing interplay with a gentle dance of doves. It's as if you are entering a soothing pool, not of water, but air. This swirling air pool, which I call it, massages away all tensions, wounds, worry, and all the fear that has been sublimated. A gloriously understated work.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

Through Dec. 29

Guthrie Theater
818 So. 2nd St., Mpls.
(612) 377-2224

www.guthrietheater.org

Joe Chvala ranks as one of the nation's foremost theater choreographers. His Flying Foot Forum developed its own vocabulary of movement. Chvala has also been ascending as a first-rate stage director. His thoughtful insights into dramatic literature beautifully meld with his unique sense of movement. He has directed the current production of the Guthrie's annual holiday tradition, *A Christmas Carol*, based on Charles Dickens's book and adapted for the stage by Crispin Whittell. J.C. Cutler plays the lead role of Ebenezer Scrooge.

Chvala reflects on some of the concerns the play puts forth: "Deep in our psyches we fear the coldness and the darkness of winter. Mid-winter holidays, especially in the north, are often about bringing the light and warmth back into a harsh cold world. In the Dickens' novel, the first description of Scrooge uses three or four frozen wintry images to describe him. Ultimately Scrooge's heart is frozen. We fear people like him because they have no empathy and we fear becoming like him ourselves because we

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have all been through heartbreaking events that could make us build walls around our own hearts. Throughout the play and the book Scrooge cracks open bit by bit. Eventually his heart melts because of the light and the warmth he is forced to witness in people who, as he says, 'have no reason to be merry.' For an audience, to witness the transformation of Ebenezer Scrooge is to find light in the darkness and warmth in the cold and ultimately to find hope where none seems to exist. That is a very powerful thing, especially for those of us who live in the colder regions of the world."

When asked about his signature dance style, Chvala shares, "Before I ever even imagined having a dance company, I did theater for about 18 years so I think my theater aesthetic probably influences my choreographic work more than vice versa. That being said, dance has often been a big part of my theater work. Certainly directing a show with 45 performers requires an eye for movement and visual complexity. The first year that I worked on *A Christmas Carol* I did a lot of research into the social dances of the times and then had to figure out how to capture their essence and still make them dramatic and compelling for an audience to watch. Beyond that, there is all the street life, the etiquette, the general way a place like London moves and the dramatic sweeping changes of time and place that the ghosts create in navigating that world. The set, designed by Walter Spangler, is a gorgeous depiction of a street in Victorian London—a canvas for me to create a living, breathing backdrop for all the action of the play. While my directing mind is thinking about character development, authenticity, rising and falling action, and the best way to work with each actor, my choreographic mind thinks a lot about timing, pacing, context, focus, balance, composition, storytelling, and, in this case, period movement. Ultimately, everything in this show has to create a credible Victorian world—a world where someone like Ebenezer Scrooge might start his wild Christmas Eve ghostly adventure by hating the world he lives in and end it by being completely in love with humanity. Everything needs to artfully reflect, heighten, punctuate, and ultimately support the action of Scrooge's transformation. I try to create a world surrounding the action that won't necessarily always be part of the conscious attention of the audience but will always somehow enhance their experience of the story in a subconscious



Driving Miss Daisy. Photo by Michal Daniel

way. The scene work that happens within this world centers more around acting and finding the moments between the characters that change everything and move the story forward."

DRIVING MISS DAISY

Through Dec. 22

**Jungle Theater, 2951 Lyndale Av. S., Mpls.
(612) 822-7063**

www.jungletheater.com

Playwright Alfred Uhry's Tony and Pulitzer Prize-winner walks a tightrope between sentiment and authentic emotion and the Jungle's current production finds the authenticity. But how could you miss with Wendy Lehr as the wealthy Daisy Werthern and James Craven as Hoke Coleburn, her chauffeur? The strength and challenge of the 1987 comedy-drama lies in its well-balanced time frame which goes from 1947 to 1973. Bain Boehlke has directed the piece with a clear sense of how the characters change over time and how the time itself changes. Boehlke also designed the set in which time seems to have stood still. The same can be said of Amelia Cheever's costumes, and I mean that as a compliment.

What makes *Driving Miss Daisy* different from numerous other works in the Southern Gothic style is that its white protagonist is Jewish, therefore, a perennial target of the Ku Klux Klan. The Klan is typically associated with its abiding hatred for black folks and cross-burning is one of its blistering trademarks. However, the Klan's antisemitism is just as abiding, though often less obvious. Uhry, who grew up in Atlanta, gives us a perspective based on his grandmother and her African-American chauffeur.

Lehr also reveals Daisy's own unexamined prejudices with frankness. However, in a gripping scene wherein Daisy is made aware of an aspect of Hoke's personality she had not been aware of previously, she infuses the action with a profound

moment where she uplifts him. Cravens responds in kind with beautiful vulnerability and innocence. It's one of those moments where you see two truly great, seasoned actors giving it all to the audience. It's like a wave of love.

Twin Cities theatergoers are accustomed to top-notch performances from Lehr and Cravens, which they both deliver with grace and humanity at the Jungle. But Charles Fraser as Daisy's son, Boolie, is the production's real revelation. The Georgia drawl he uses reflects not only the character's geographical location but an inner forlornness that makes the character poignant, if not a bit tragic.



Princess Diana, The Musical.
Photo courtesy of Actors Theater

PRINCESS DIANA, THE MUSICAL

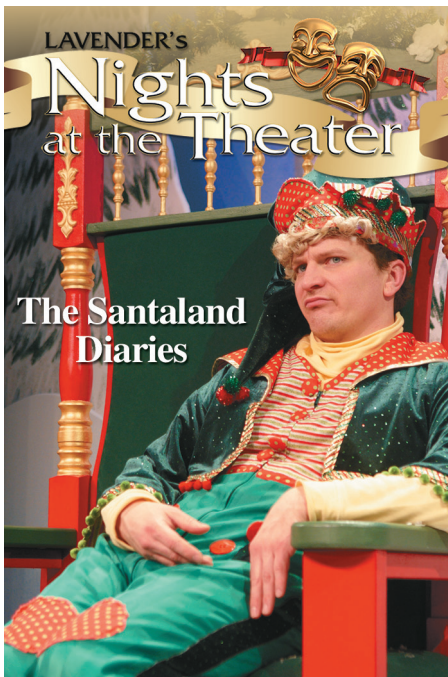
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**Cabaret Theater at Camp Bar
490 N. Robert St., St. Paul
(800) 838-3006**

www.BrownPaperTickets.com

At Camp Bar's Cabaret Theater in St. Paul, Actors Theater of Minnesota has remounted its production of *Princess Diana – The Musical*. Songwriter Karen Sokolof Javitch and writer Elaine Jabenis follow Diana's story from being an unknown teenager to a woman of monumental exposure by an invasive media monolith. Ross Young has directed McKayla Marso and Sean Dillon as Diana

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"For many music lovers, the Twin Cities Gay Men's Chorus holiday concert is an annual tradition. With new artistic director Ben Riggs out front this promises to be an especially festive event."
— Pamela Espeland, *MinnPost.com*

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I Saw Daddy Marry Santa Claus. Photo by Dani Werner

and Prince Charles, spanning their budding relationship on to Diana's controversial death in a car accident.

Music Director Kevin Dutcher observes, "The music for Diana is not typical Musical Theater. It is a hybrid, with some of the songs in the pop vein and some that are more recitative, where dialogue between two actors is set to music. The show spans a myriad of styles." (Diana came to be known as 'the People's Princess.')

I SAW DADDY MARRY SANTA CLAUS

Through Jan. 4
Brave New Workshop
824 Hennepin Av., Mpls.
(612) 332-6620

www.bravenewworkshop.com

The legendary comedy theater's annual holiday revue is typically the season's local comedy scene's biggest smash. But this year the Brave New Workshop's *I Saw Daddy Marry Santa Claus* directed by Caleb McEwen and Katy McEwen has outdone itself. It's the best holiday show they've staged in years. Though there are some truly funny vignettes about same sex-marriage, it contains a broad variety of contemporary comedic commentary by one of the best troupe's around.

Lauren Anderson delights as Mrs. Claus, a lesbian whose marriage with the now-uncloseted Santa Claus has been a front for

both of them for time immemorial. Now they're both free to drop the traditional image. A lyric resounds that "Santa's gay as San Francisco Bay!" In another sequence Anderson plays a Lutheran woman who goes to the Mall of America to take her daughter to see Santa, but she finds she has to fill out a questionnaire that reveals her unconscious views of race, white privilege, and how her religious views affect her view of Christmas. It's a searing send-up of how we have become so factionalized about Christmas that there have to be different kinds of Santa Clauses for different groups of people.

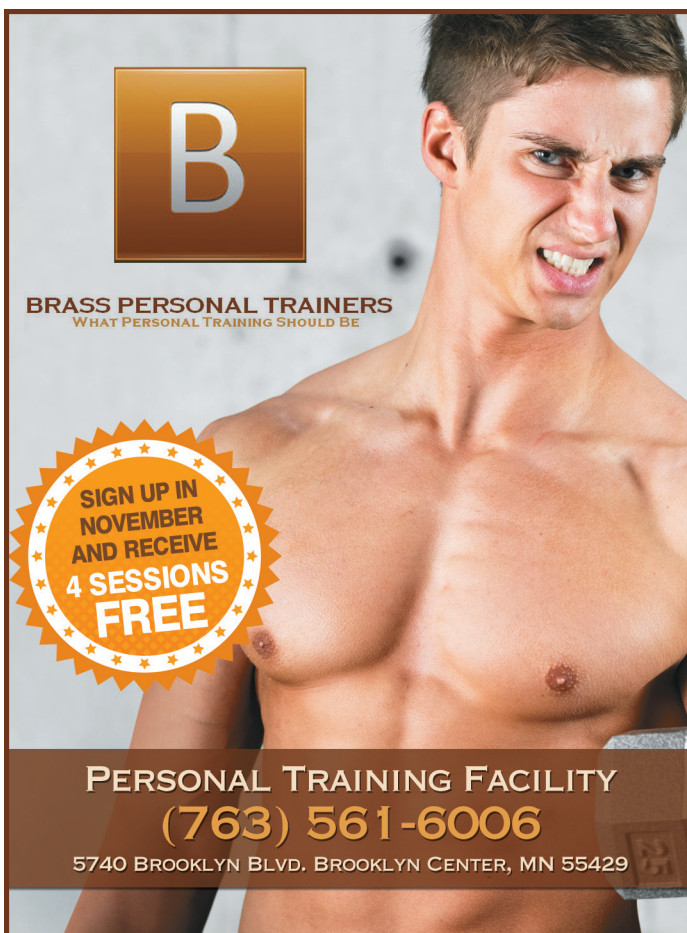
Throughout the show, that charmer, Andy Hilbrands, plays narrator Morgan Freeman with video projections of various Freeman films like *Unforgiven* and *Invictus*. He also has a penchant for reading titillating sections from *Fifty Shades of Grey*. (Full-disclosure: I actually think it's a very good book.) Hilbrands also plays a man who profitably plays on the white guilt of the politically correct with Kwanzaa privileges, known as seven core principles, that give him access to white women. When the subject of white advantage comes up, actor Matt Erkel quips, "If I'm part of the dominant culture then why is my wallet held together by duct tape?" Here this collaboratively written work rightly points out that

economic downturns affect every group, no matter what race. Erkel's line also points to how this troupe is willing to take on the left on their own hypocrisies and corrupted extrapolations, as well as the right. There are, in fact, many instances where racial and multicultural correctness, not to mention GLBT political correctness, do indeed need to be spoofed. But too many are afraid of a lawsuit.

And, of course, there are some situations in which conservatives and liberals are equally awful. There's a satirical section on the surveillance overreach of the National Security Agency (NSA) which has been allowed to grow cancerous under both the Bush/Cheney and Obama/Biden administrations. Though sharply performed and rich in insight, it regrettably shies away from bringing up Edward Snowden and Chelsea Manning (formerly known as Bradley), two people who have been caught up in the NSA web. Nor does it go after former Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, Senator Dianne Feinstein, and their various colleagues across the aisle, who have all been integral to the ever-unfolding NSA controversies. (Yes. Her new name is Chelsea, as in Clinton.)

The electronic realm is spoofed again with scathing wit in a scene about 'online shopping disorder' wherein the customers have become such zombies of the internet that they cannot function in an actual retail store. This works to the advantage of less than honest 'actual' employees who find ways of ripping them off. A population of automotons is easily fooled. One employee complains of being 'a glorified search bar.'

However, the revue's most brilliant scene is carried by the crackling Taj Ruler who plays a paranoid schoolteacher whose former student (a confident Anderson) visits her decades later. The underpaid teacher has developed panicky phobias of everything from personal interaction to class material content. In another unusual and inspired stroke for BNW, Ruler, Anderson, and Tom Reed play three people in a seniors facility at Christmastime. At first, I groaned to myself: oh god, they're playing senior stereotypes. Geez. But as these characters are interspersed throughout the show, the overall effect is genuinely absurdist. It reminded me of some of the short, odd experimental plays penned by Edward Albee and Tennessee Williams; which points to the intelligence this particular wave of BNW troupe actors brings to what is still, nonetheless, a wild and wonderful party. ◻



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Fiddler at Chan – Tradition, Underscored by Change

Here's one "Tradition" I wholeheartedly endorse: the return of *Fiddler on the Roof* to the Chanhassen Dinner Theatre's stage. This is its fifth production here, returning for the 50th anniversary of its Broadway debut after an absence of 20 years.

The musical begins—no, that fails to describe it—explodes onto the stage with "Tradition," performed with the force of a cyclone. And immediately we're swept away, caught in the klezmer-like music, the bittersweet, minor key of that haunting, Eastern European Jewish music, interlaced with more dreamy numbers like Golde's poignant "Do You Love Me?"

Drawing inspiration from Russian Yiddish writer Sholem Aleichem and whimsical Russian painter Marc Chagall, the story is the enduring one of balancing the dear traditions that knit folks together as a besieged community with the need to embrace challenging changes begged for by current times. As in, who can marry whom. (Sound familiar, proponents of Minnesota's Marriage Amendment?) So: a musical with both a heart and a message. We easily succumb to both.

The stage is set—just barely, and most effectively—simply with the bare birches of the Russian forest, upon which, almost as through

a gauzy filter, the sepia tones of the villagers' dress is interwoven, like faded photos of a former time—appropriately subdued backdrops that allow the energy of the performance to carry the day. The voices of all are winsome and strong, pure and sincere, from Keith Rice as Teyve's oh-so-Yiddish "If I Were a Rich Man" to his daughters' dreamy "Matchmaker, Matchmaker" and the pensive ballad "Sunrise, Sunset" sung evocatively by him and his wife, Golde, performed with love, wit and understanding by Michelle Barber. Yet it's the dancers who steal—okay, blatantly run away with—the show. And it's Chan choreographer Tamara Kangas Erickson at her very best, which is saying a lot.

The large ensemble of familiar Chan faces—among them, Jared Oxborough as the ardent student, David Anthony Brinkley as the harrumphing butcher—is complemented by a share of newcomers, such as Serena Brooks, sweet as daughter Tzeitel. Director Michael Brindisi draws the magic from the script and music, saluting but not milking the moments of sorrow as well as celebrating the vitality, the very life, of people who must change to endure. The production continues through February: www.chanhassentheatres.com □



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READ MY LIPS: MONTREAL

by Carla Waldemar

Montreal was born from trappers seeking riches, soldiers in service to their king, and priests sent forth by God. My personal agenda borrowed from all three. I'm definitely greedy—for good eating. And, as an army travels on its stomach, I eagerly re-upped. But primarily I came to worship—to pay lip (smacking) service to the Holy Trinity of Montreal's culinary icons: smoked meat, bagels, and poutine.



(Opposite page) Marché Bonsecours. Photo © Tourisme Québec; (Above from left) St-Viateur Bagel & Café. Photo © St-Viateur Bagel & Café; Saint-Denis Street. Photo © MTTQ, Christiane Hamelin

"Montreal—the second-largest French-speaking city in the world"

(Whoever said, "Man does not live by bread alone" was absolutely right. It takes all three.) Oh, there's also plenty of fine dining in this city of 5,000 restaurants (over 10 per square mile), so we'll dip our spoons in those as well.

Bagels, smoked meat, poutine: the top three reasons to board the plane. They're comfort food; they're the sustenance of immigrants. Montreal—the second-largest French-speaking city in the world—grew up along the St. Lawrence River where the first European arrival, voyageur Jacques Cartier, beached his boat in 1535. An archaeological museum displays those early stone foundations along with—huh?—an exhibit of the Beatles' more recent visit in the 1960s. Cartier's house still overlooks the harbor, aside a tiny sailors' church from the 1600s. Nearby, an early marketplace has morphed into stylish Marche Bonsecours, a showcase of classy Quebecois designers. Get the whole story at the Centre d'Histoire, a chance to relive five vibrant slices of Montreal's history, unraveled in catchy non-museum-speak.

Play Queen for a Day at the Pierre du Calvet, a luxe 1725 mansion-turned-hotel befitting Louis XIV, who bestowed his royal approval on the Grey Nuns' convent nearby. Today the historic limestone facades here in the Old Port host trendy shops like Sweet Fellow (where Louis could trade his wig for man bags, chic and cheeky bow ties, fab fedoras), art galleries, and cafes aplenty.

The city's western sector bears streets named for upright British citizens, while those in the eastern, French, division invoke the names of saints. Along Sherbrook Avenue's Golden Mile, gawk at the mansions of the one percent of the 1800s, marshalling the Museum of Fine Arts with eye candy ranging from Old Masters to contemporary Canadians and enviable First Nations sculptures. Nearby, the McCord Museum continues the First Nations story in a display entitled "Wearing Our Identity" featuring beaded moccasins, fur parkas, bear teeth necklaces of fine design. Meanwhile, the city's Contemporary Museum updates the tribes' views via hip-hop art.

Head north to discover Montreal's Jewish enclave, peopled with black-hatted Hassidic gents, and the cornerstone of a foodie's pilgrimage. In this neighborhood of humble homes adorned with Montreal's signature outdoor staircases (beware in winter!), St-Viator Bagels has served as the city's culinary E R since 1957, paddling smoky circles from its woodfired oven 24/7 every day of the year. Grab half a dozen, and half will have disappeared into a dining memory before you hit the sidewalk.

What makes a Montreal bagel unique? It's smaller, denser, and sweeter than its stateside cousins, thanks to malt in the batter and honey in the water dip. How many does St-Viator pump out? "We're supposed to say 'a thousand a day,'" grins the counter man, "but we're not counting."

In the Plateau, also home of Little Italy, the Jean-Talon Market is a foodie magnet, crammed with stalls celebrating all things Quebecois: luscious cheeses, rich pates and sausage links, premier breads and pastries,

Continued on page 30 ➔



Schwartz's. Photo © Tourisme Montreal, Pierre Luc Dufour

"Fanatics,
including
yours truly,
line the
sidewalk in
the driving
rain for a
chance at that
fabled sand-
wich—piled
high on rye
bread swabbed
with mustard,
along with a
pickle so
garlicky I was
friendless for
days.

and endless produce, from cauliflower big as beach balls to carrots akin to majorettes' batons, to all things apple—cider, ice wine, pyramids of shiny fruit. Also, there's maple everything (sugar, syrup, candy). Plateau hosts cozy bistros like Chez Close, where brunch involves a stir-fry of eggs and duck gizzards, or simply duck confit, along with steaming cups of chocolat and beignets for dessert.

But I'm here for the smoked meat. Head straight for the Plateau's Holy Temple, aka Schwartz's Deli, smoking its uber-juicy, legendary brisket since 1928. Fanatics, including yours truly, line the sidewalk in the driving rain for a chance at that fabled sandwich—piled high on rye bread swabbed with mustard, along with a pickle so garlicky I was friendless for days. Jostle your way to a

shared table just like myriads of fans before you, from Céline Dion to Jerry Lewis.

Now for poutine. And, ahem, a side of foie gras. That's the magic combo at Au Pied de Cochon, arguably the best restaurant in the city, if not all North America. Snag a seat at the counter of the tiny, lively dive—the polar opposite of haute cuisine—to catch the floor show: eight flaming burn-

Continued on page 32 ➔

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ers commanded by cooks with the agility of a Cirque du Soleil performer.

The meal is not for the faint-hearted, but for the fortunate. Poutine rules—that only-in-Canada concoction of gravy gushing over fries, all pocked with squeaky cheese curds. It's served everywhere from McDo's to Maché, a diner with add-on options like hot dogs and pineapple (don't!), to Cochon, where it's glorified with a globe of foie gras giant as a grapefruit. Save room (hah!) for the iconic pig's trotter, served up with gravy, mashed potatoes, and stewed apples. And for dessert, certainly the signature maple milkshake. Patron Martin Picard slides a glass of Armagnac my way to glam up the drink.

Foodie voyageurs can sign on for dining tours (www.ToursCulinairesMontreal.com) of the grunge-going-glam St-Henri neighborhood. Amid re-emerging storefronts we discover Rustica, a shiny bakery where macaroons reign supreme (well, so do the Nanaimo cookie bars, cheesecakes, everything). We end up at Grumma 78, a food truck-turned-warehouse destination, to feast on inventive hybrids like a banh mi taco, escargot quesadilla, or chicken paired with johnnycakes.

The liveliest boulevard in the entire city is St-Denis, vibrating with trendy apparel emporiums, bars, clubs, and BYOB cafes. Its near, slightly more polished neighbor, St-Laurent, is home to Juliette & Chocolat, serving wicked-good pitchers of chocolate, warm or cold, chosen by country of origin and degree of blessed bitterness. Back in the Old Port, The Champagnerie boasts a dozen bubbly by the flute to accompany well-curated noshes. They warm the trek to Toqué, the fanciest table in town, for locally-sourced baubles like foie gras mousse with apple glaze and popcorn; venison haunch with cauliflower, black cabbage chips, and wild mushrooms; and Arctic char confit burned with maple syrup.

Time for the airport. Glad they weigh the luggage and not me. For information, visit www.tourisme-montreal.org ■



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October - Black & Blue: fab party, all-night dancing.

October - Volley Ball: 40 teams for this gay sports event.

Cher performs April 25. Need we say more?

For more info, visit www.montreal.gaycities.com



(From top left) Old Montreal. Photo © Tourisme Montréal, Matthieu Dupuis. Place Jacques-Cartier. Photo © Tourisme Montréal, Matthieu Dupuis. Poutine. Photo © Tourisme Québec

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HOLIDAY
Style

Holiday Shopping Hotspots

BY SHANE LUECK

Each of the stores featured here have opened within the past year and offer something fantastic to the community. Owned by either members or allies of the community, each has created its own niche while still catering to the masses. Consider each of these new local hotspots while you embark on your holiday shopping.

Patric Richardson in his element. Inset: Charming tables of gift items available at Mona Williams include Cinderella (\$18.95), The Three Little Pigs Architectural Book (\$18.95), YSL Prêt-à-Porter Coloring Book (\$18.95), Champagne Bottle Stole (\$14), Hilda Glasgow Fashion Illustration Gifts (\$5-\$25), and Reading Glasses (magnetic and mounted, \$50-\$55).



Mona Williams

With a story for every piece in the store, Patric Richardson welcomes you into his boutique with open arms. Named for the style icon, Mona Williams features designer and luxury resale consignment, but in an environment that makes you feel like it's all brand new. The team behind Mona Williams redefines how you shop while curating couture, finding the best pieces from the best seasons of the best designers. Richardson is quick to add that his team takes the point of view of the brilliant designer Yves Saint Laurent: "Fashion fades, style remains." Having opened in February of this year, Mona Williams offers more than just high-end fashion. Shoppers are also given the chance to experience luxurious gift items, such as delectable candies from Kentucky, the entire line of The Laundress specialty detergents and fabric care, or exquisite children's books featuring vintage fashions. A one-of-a-kind couture shopping experience awaits.

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Maddie Poling in her St. Paul boutique with the store's namesake, Conan (aka "Cocobear"). Inset: Stocking stuffer cat toys.

HOLIDAY

Style Holiday Shopping Hotspots



Cocobear Boutique + Pet Care

A convenient St. Paul stop for all things canine and feline, Cocobear offers convenient, friendly dog grooming, dog walking, and pet sitting services combined with a trendy boutique for the pet lover. Cocobear's products include fun and unique toys, treats, leashes, collars and gift items for pets as well as pet lovers, emphasizing locally sourced, American made, and natural and organic products.

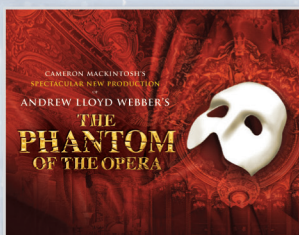
Unlike some big-box pet stores, the Cocobear team creates a soothing environment for your pet, making your dog or cat's grooming experience a more calm, enjoyable event. Taking pride in their level of service, Cocobear constantly strives to be the best in an ever-growing industry. Boasting a team with each member owning animals, you can be assured that they will treat your pet the same way they treat their own: spoiled.

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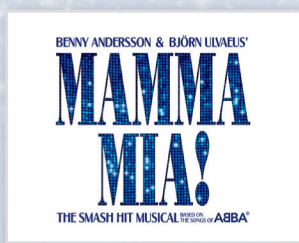
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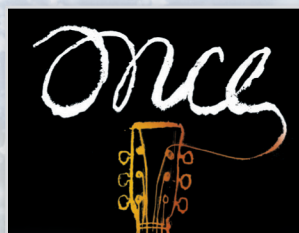
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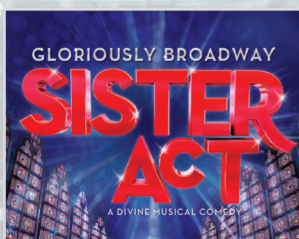
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²Cabaret contains mature content. Ghost the Musical is recommended for ages 12+. Please be advised that there is mild violence, mature themes and dialogue that are true to the story and plot. Parental guidance is suggested.

Merary Montes and Reagan Sirisavath surrounded by their diverse and growing inventory of GLBT-oriented products. Inset: Novelty T-shirts for all colors of the rainbow (\$14).

HOLIDAY

Style Holiday Shopping Hotspots



The GLBT Spot

A vibrant, outre, and friendly community store, The GLBT Spot opened in September and has already received tremendous support. The store aims to offer moderately priced, occasionally wacky clothing and products while providing the ambiance of a comfortable upscale shopping experience. Offering classic products such as the Andrew Christian Collection as well as novelties like rainbow socks, beanies, and bowties, The GLBT Spot has something for everyone.

The sales team subscribes to a mission of providing customers with an all-inclusive wide array of merchandise and apparel that will make them feel empowered and share their pride as gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans*, and queer individuals.

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HOLIDAY *Style* Holiday Shopping Hotspots

Light floods into the stylish and sleek hub of coffee and kink activity. Inset: Get your gear here.



Twin Cities Leather & Latte

As a community and kink retailer based in Minneapolis, Twin Cities Leather & Latte pride themselves on being a business run by kinky people, for kinky people. Equipped with a mission to serve, grow, fortify, and nurture the kink community of the Twin Cities, the three owners bring a combined 30 years of kink involvement to the business operations. As a community-based store, Twin Cities Leather & Latte provides quality products and a space for the kink and leather communities to connect, learn, and grow. Featuring notable products such as hand-crafted leather gear, latex gear, bondage devices, and dungeon furniture, the shop also offers full service latex and leather repair. What sets Twin Cities Leather & Latte apart? The new location offers more than just a leather store. As can be guessed, the business has expanded to include a coffee shop complete with pastries. What's more, the owners strive to create a community resource with ties to kink/leather blogs, educational materials, speakers, history, product suggestions, news, and other resources. The owners intend to help customers understand, experience and enjoy the leather and kink sexual lifestyle(s).

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HOLIDAY *Style*

by

SHANE LUECK

ANTHONY SORENSEN

From Martha Stewart to Minneapolis

What reason would the only hairstylist to touch Martha Stewart's hair since 2009 have to pack up everything, leave it all behind, and move to Minneapolis? "I think Martha thought I'd be back," jokes Anthony Sorensen, the Long Island native whose boyfriend's career

prompted the move to the Midwest. "But I won't be, I love it here!"

"I moved here for a lifestyle change," Sorensen says. "Leaving Martha and the clients I built over 16 years was by far the hardest part. They both became like family."

“ALTHOUGH I WAS BUSY, I HAD NO IDEA WHAT I WAS IN FOR BEING MARTHA’S EXCLUSIVE STYLIST,” SORENSSEN SAYS. “TRULY THE HARDEST-WORKING WOMAN ON THE PLANET!”

Sorensen’s relationship with the domestic queen began in October 2008, when his then-boss, Frederic Fekkai, sent him to style her hair for the holiday issue of *Martha Stewart Living*. “I didn’t sleep a wink the night before and was literally shaking as I started her hair,” Sorensen must have gotten over his jitters; by March 2009, he was working as her exclusive stylist and convinced her to grow her hair longer.

At the time, Sorensen was working full-time at Fekkai’s newest salon at The Mark Hotel on the Upper East Side. As someone involved with creative direction within the company, Sorensen was also involved with New York Fashion Week – he knew the hectic lifestyle. “Although I was busy, I had no idea what I was in for being Martha’s exclusive stylist,” Sorensen says. “Truly the hardest-working woman on the planet!”

Looking back at his time with the woman who stole our hearts and reminded us that “it’s a good thing,” Sorensen has made four appearances on the Martha Stewart Show, been on Oprah twice, and styled the hair of many iconic celebrities. “The glamorous life did include private jets, rides on the Hinckley and in the Edsel,” he reassured. “I’ve seen all three houses (Skylands in Maine being my favorite), and had meals to die for and holidays on the farm.”

But is a life with the style and entertaining guru all glitz and glamour? It also included blow-drying a chicken for a Macy’s shoot, en-

countering donkeys in the dressing room for the TV show, and a rooster swatting Sorensen in the face during a Thanksgiving shoot one year. “But I’m here to tell you, it’s all true,” he says. “The woman knows perfection: lives it and demands it!”

Having left Stewart behind, how does Sorensen view his past clients? Among the ranks are Kelly and Sharon Osbourne, Princess Caroline of Monaco, Peter and Harry Brandt, and Hillary Clinton. “Kelly should definitely go back to blonde, I’m not feeling that blue-gray silver color,” he says. “Hillary, if she reads this, should hire me full-time!”

Although leaving Stewart was bittersweet, Sorensen says the transition to his current position as Master Stylist with Juut Salonspa in Edina was beyond easy. “David Wagner, Juut’s founder, has created something very special and beautiful here and the staff reflects that,” he says. “I have literally been welcomed into the ‘family.’”

Juut, with locations in Edina and downtown Minneapolis, remains his focus as he concentrates on building clientele within the Twin Cities. “I hope to continue making people’s days here in the salon and giving what I know of hair-styling away through our continuing education program here,” he says. “As for the future: enjoying a slower paced life, my dog, Mr. Chuckles, and eventually getting a cabin up North! It seems like the thing to do.” ■

Be right on trend this holiday season with these style tips from Anthony Sorensen:

For women, very soft bangs are all the rage right now – think Brigitte Bardot when communicating this to your stylist. A length of just below the shoulder for straight hair and a bit above the shoulder for wavy hair is recommended. “It’s a great length because it’s so versatile,” Sorensen says. As for color, Sorensen recommends what he is calling cinnamon brown as the color of the season. For reference, he suggests looking up Kate Moss’s fall Versace campaign to get the color just right.

For men, Sorensen is seeing more long on top styles with disconnected short sides. And you can’t forget the beards! Facial hair is everywhere this season from the red carpet to the college campus – just be sure to keep it trimmed and neat.

Lastly, always have a hair mask handy for winter. Sorensen says, “like your skin, hair gets dry in the winter too!” Sleep with a moisturizing mask in your hair like Aveda’s dry remedy mask. It’s a great stocking stuffer!

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HOLIDAY *Style & Gift Guide*

by

CARLA WALDEMAR



WINE NOTES FALL/WINTER 2013 – SIPPING CALIFORNIA SUNSHINE

Okay, summer's over, and just as you trade shorts for a fleece jacket, it's time to drain the dregs of those light, thirst-quenching summer wines—that frisky vinho verde, the swimming-pool rose—and uncork the sturdier stuff of autumn and winter. While it's fun to experiment with those catchy \$10 labels to serve with an impromptu pasta or burger off the grill, when it comes to a Big Deal dinner—the upcoming holidays or a guest list flush with People to Impress—it's also time for a Big Deal wine. A wine of fuller body; longer, more aromatic finish; and mouthfeel that lingers in your dreams. But—um—which? Read on. Here are notes from a recent tasting of several premier California winemakers' flagship pours.

The 2011 Overlook Chardonnay from Landmark Vineyards, in Sonoma County, doesn't boast of single-vineyard status. Instead, it opts for the best of the best: grapes selected from over 20 vineyards, all barreled separately in French oak, then blended to achieve the winemaker's nirvana—consistently, year after year. The nose is like an old-fashioned flower garden—honeysuckle and honey—which follows through with a full, creamy mouthfeel, wafting hints of nectarine, sweet apple, and toast (\$25).

The 2011 Chardonnay from Chateau Montelena in Napa Valley was born of that year's cool growing season, resulting in lower sugar that allows the voluptuous, fruity flavors of peach and nectarine to shine. An aroma of even sweeter tropical fruit bonds with a lighter

hint of pear on the palate. That pear follows through to the finish, underscored by a hint of nuttiness from its oak aging (\$50).

If you're looking for a luscious, deep-deep ruby Bordeaux-style Cabernet Sauvignon, look to Justin and its 2010 Isosceles vintage. Justin hand-picks and hand-sorts its grapes, then, after the crush, rests the juice in small oak barrels for over a year. 2010's long, cool growing season provided balance and crispness to the underlying flavors of black current and cherry, underscored with aromas of—yes—licorice and cedar, along with the vanilla gleaned from barrel aging in American oak. It's oh-so-smooth to sip and savor (\$26).

Even more lush, if that's possible: Concannon Vineyard's 2009 Captain Joe's Reserve Petite Sirah, grown on the winery's Livermore Valley estate. Breathe in, and you'll inhale spices like nutmeg and cloves that introduce a soft and creamy palate feel with flavors of blueberry and blackberry. It's been aged in oak 17 months, and you can continue to age it in your cellar for six years, if you can resist that corkscrew. Serve it with everything from burgers to Gorgonzola to a rich but not-so-sweet chocolate dessert (\$36).

Speaking of dessert: Time to break out the Port—Graham's Six Grapes Port, to be exact (and thrilled). And economical; called "the everyday Port for Vintage Port drinkers, it's only \$22). It's rich, dark, and fruity—think plums and cherries—and robust. Perfect for the fireside, with its long, lingering finish. □

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HOLIDAY *Gift Guide*

Gift Ideas from

JOY SUMMERS

1. Barrel-Aged Products by Blis

They hooked me with their bourbon cask-aged maple syrup, but I became a full-on devotee of the entire line of products when I first tasted the sweet-smoky heat of their hot sauce. Made in Michigan by a chef, these products elevate any dish they're used with to an other-worldly gourmet realm. Drizzle that thick, dark maple syrup on a stack of flappers and kick that other stuff to the curb. It's delicious thinned with hot water and used in place of simple syrup in drinks.

The fish sauce comes with a Kablam! kind of flavor, upping the umami factor for dishes like cold-soothing Tom Yum or crowd-pleasing Thai fried rice. Because they're aged, they are a little more expensive than their grocery store counterparts, but the lazy gourmet in your life will thank you. Available at several local

retailers including

The Golden Fig.

www.blisgourmet.com

2. Border Bourbon

Hot on the heels of the craft beer boom comes the craft spirits boom. Small distilleries are just beginning to show up in the metro area, but the crew

at 45th Parallel has already been brewing their spirits for some time. How long? Long enough to have aged a beauty of a bourbon. The grains come from a 6th-generation family

farm, raised minutes away from the distillery. Whereas most big-name bourbons all come from the same handful of companies, just sold with different labels, these craft beauties are exceptional sippers. Bottles are in

limited editions, so inquire at the distillery or your local premium spirits retailer. www.45thparallelsiprirts.com

3. Amy Thielen's *The New Midwestern Table: 200 Heartland Recipes Cookbook*

It was a remarkable thing to open to a random page inside this new cookbook and discover a mention of Sammy's Pizza in Grand Rapids. Growing up, I ate there practically daily and I miss those pies! Paging through I found a dozen more highly personal food memories that this woman, who I'd never met, somehow managed to draw upon. This tome celebrates all that is wonderful about our regional cooking without any of the schtick or processed products. I've been working up to making every single item in this book, but first I had to start with replicating that ultra-thin pizza crust. For the holidays, I know I'll be serving the smoked whitefish

brandade and basically spending the rest of my year planning foods around this book's ideas. It is an instant classic, tucked onto a shelf next to my Grandmother Gidgee's old recipe box. www.amazon.com

4. Dashfire Brandied Cocktail Cranberries

To some, the holidays signal a time for family togetherness, ample feasts,

and endless loops of Mariah Carey's holiday station. To me, it's the drinking season. No drink says "merriment" like the Manhattan. While there are all kinds of bitters and whatnot, the best accessory in these are the new Dashfire Brandied Cocktail Cranberries, made in St. Paul. www.dashfirebitters.com

5. Jack Rudy Cocktail Co. Tonic

Do you have a friend who is far away that you wish you could share a holiday cocktail with? Why not send them the fixings with a little bottle of Jack Rudy's small batch tonic? Just a half-ounce in fizzy water with a little lime juice will cure what ails you (and if that doesn't work, throw some gin on it). With the craft cocktail boom it's all about making this stuff yourself,





but that is messy, expensive, and time consuming. Besides, this stuff is much better. It ships easily and you're just a Facetime chat away from a drinking with a long lost friend. Available at The Golden Fig. www.jackrudycocktailco.com

6. Bowls by Rogue Potters

Every year I swear I'm going to get

more art in my life and every year I inevitably wish that I'd followed through on that proclamation. This year, I'm filling my pantry with a few of these incredibly affordable works of usable art. Rogue Potters is a collective that fires their works in a little house out in the middle of nowhere, near Forest Lake. Their techniques result in beautiful earth tones accented with beautiful, metallic flecked lines.

They're almost too beautiful to use - almost. Rogue Potter's pieces go from microwave to oven to dishwasher, all safely. Also, they make food absolutely stunning to photograph. This large bowl retails for around \$40 and would make a perfect serving vessel for a fat batch of cassoulet. Look for them at Tangletown Gardens. www.roguepotters.com

7. Smoked Salt from The Golden Fig

Did you know that it's an old German tradition to give salt and bread as a housewarming present? I had no idea until a dear friend gifted me with just that. There are a million kinds of salt these days, but the one kind that I can't be without (aside from boring old Kosher) is the Smoked Salt from The Golden Fig on Grand Avenue in St. Paul. It's good in on just about everything. Grind it up fine and dust it over popcorn. Add to braises to give a BBQ bit of kick—I've even heard that this was the secret behind those fantastic ribs at 128 Cafe. It's one ingredient that you never knew you needed until you had it. Just imagine what it could do for a roast turkey or prime rib? Pair with a baguette and you've got a perfect housewarming gift. www.goldenfig.com

8. Stirsby

It's the stick that stirs! This lovely and genius utensil is made locally by John Danicic (you can find them at the Minneapolis Farmer's Market) in a beautiful array of wood tones. Whether mixing mac and cheese, scrambling eggs, or frosting a cake, this guy is the perfect implement. Oh... and it also fits just perfectly into a stocking! How nice. www.stirsby.com

9. MyDrap Tear-Off Placemats

This was my first year of hosting Thanksgiving and the amount of gear it takes to feed my whole family is astonishing. Nothing I have matches or comes without a blemish on it. Just recently I had exactly four placemats, until I discovered these tear-off placemats on a roll. They're easy to use, washable, reuseable, and, best of all, they all match! (Actually, best of all, they are incredibly affordable.) Perfect for setting any table, easily and elegantly. Available locally at Bed, Bath and Beyond or online at places like West Elm (where they're currently on sale for \$36 (but usually found for around \$10-15), 12 placemats per roll www.westelm.com

HOLIDAY

Gift Guide

Gift Ideas from

ANDY LIEN

1. Ruth Hunt Candies Cream Candy and The Cocoa Co. Hot Cocoa

Smooth and sweet, these delectables are new to my palate and sure to become mainstays. When I was little, I thought Divinity was the most exquisite of light, white holiday confections. I was wrong. Cream Candy from Kentucky is what angels make for the discerning... and Patric at Mona Williams imports it to Minnesota for our pleasure. I recommend both the regular version and the dark chocolate-dipped lovelies.

Mona Williams
Cream Candy (\$17) and Cocoa (\$20)
www.monawilliams.com

2. Minnesota Beale Project Vol. 5

The last in the series of CDs produced by Vega Productions to raise money for music education in Minnesota by way of local artists singing Beatles songs, the series goes out with a bang. Our favorites are covered by Actual Wolf, Zoo Animal, Carroll, Gary Burger (of the Monks), The Suburbs, Sonny Knight & The Lakers, Chris Bierden of Polica, Meme, Dosh, Greycoats, The Okee Dokee Brothers, The Cactus Blossoms, and the Denfield High School Jazz Band. Adam Turman artistically depicts Minnesota icons as the Fab Four, making the CD even more of a keepsake. The release date is December 3.

Available at Target, local independent stores, and online.
www.vegaproductions.org

3. Pottery by Caulfield Clay Works

I live in an artist community and regularly drool over the works of my neighbors, none so much as the art by Kevin Caulfield of Caulfield Clay Works. When I first saw this beautiful piece a few years ago, I knew I had to have it. Its melted, broken glass center sparkles like an agate and makes my whole loft prettier with its presence. Kevin also specializes in custom dinnerware and woodfired pottery that includes drinking vessels, bowls, sushi sets, vases, teapots, and so much more.

Prices vary.
On Facebook: Caulfield Clay Works

4. Variety of Gift Ribbons

I love wrapped presents. Note the past tense, there. Of course, when I have to actually do the wrapping, I like to make the whole operation (and end results) fun and attractive. This six-pack of ribbons from Target helps me dress up my gifts at a reasonable price.

Target
\$15
www.target.com

5. Stun Guns for Juggling

No. I don't want weapons for Christmas, I'm a dove...a pacifist, if you will. But, I do love seeing me some comedy that features three guys--Reynaldo, Bald Guy, and Other



One--doing death-defying (and relatively ridiculous) stunts like juggling active stun guns between two of them while the third balances on a metal ladder in the middle. It never gets old. Make sure you get your tickets to the holiday show by The Danger Committee at the Brave New Workshop this season and see that (and so much more) for yourself.

A Stocking Full of Awesome III: You'll Shoot Your Eye Out
Nov 29th, 2013 - Jan 4th, 2014
www.thedangercommittee.com

6. Holiday and Heritage Blends by Christopher Mohs

I find the coolest people in the best places. Christopher Mohs and I started following each other on Instagram because we're both food enthusiasts. Then I found out that he's a Minnesota native and carving out a name in the foodie world of New York City, first with his book *Great Eats! In A New York Minute, Or Two* as well as this entire line of spices and products which is inspired heavily

by Minnesotan and Scandinavian flavors along with a variety of other global influences. Pictured here: Holiday Spice Artisan Blend (Sweet), The Woods Artisan Blend (Savory), Tuscan Sun Artisan Blend (Savory), Crumble Spice Artisan Blend (Sweet), Nordic Fields Artisan Blend (Savory), Artisan Scent Candles (Crumble Spice, Sandalwood, Pear Spice Cake), and Holiday Spice Cider Steeping Bags.

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www.christophermohs.com

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PARASOLE.COM
NO EXPIRATION AND NO FEES

HOLIDAY

Gift Guide

Local Gift Ideas

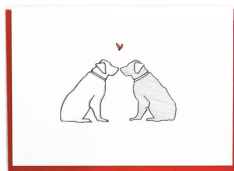
1. Fierce Mally Cards

Simple and cute dog-themed cards made locally in Lowertown St. Paul by Fierce Mally Cards, for any occasion.

\$4 each

Cocobear Pet Care

www.cocobearpetcare.com



—1

2. Gold Paw Fleece Pullover

Super soft microfiber fleece by Gold Paw: warm, simple and based out of Minnesota and everything is USA made!

Comes in tiny to giant breed sizes and a variety of colors.

\$22 - \$36

Cocobear Pet Care

www.cocobearpetcare.com



—2

3. Catnip Cassette Tapes

Made by Too Bad Mice, these adorable and hilarious catnip filled cassette tape toys have names like Purvanna and Meowtallica.

\$8 each

Cocobear Pet Care

www.cocobearpetcare.com



—3

4. Shinola iPad Cases

Protect your technology in these beautiful cases to fit both iPad and iPad Mini from Shinola. Handmade in Detroit using Horween leather.

\$125 - \$165

Max's

www.stylebymax.com



—4



photo Noah Wolf

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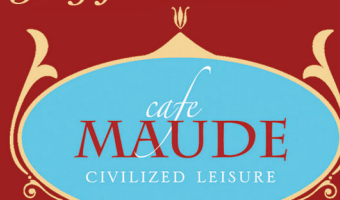
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HOLIDAY

Gift Guide

Local Gift Ideas

1. Rhythm of Love Diamond Collection

The unique mounting allows the center diamond to move and shimmer, creating an amazing, sparkling effect. The slightest movement, even her heartbeat, causes the diamond to shimmer and sparkle.

Prices from \$100
Arthur's Jewelers
www.arthursjewelers.com



— 1

2. Diamond Panther Ring

Show your wild side while wearing this sculpted 18k gold Panther ring featuring over two carats of fancy diamond pave and emerald eyes. Let us create a custom expression of your love.

\$9500
Charlemagne Fine Jewelry
www.charlemagnefinejewelry.com



2

3. Roberto DeMeglio Signature Bracelet

From Italy with Love Best Dressed Wrist. Roberto DeMeglio's Domino Collection, brilliant diamonds set in 18 karat white gold elegantly accent this black matte fine ceramic bracelet.

\$2438
Scheherazade
www.sjewelers.com



3—

4. The Laundress Collection

A collection of specialty detergents, fabric care and accessories for home, travel and storage, Laundress products eliminate 99% of your dry-cleaning needs.

\$6 - \$40
Mona Williams
www.monawilliams.com



4

5. Home Fragrances

A collection of luxurious fragrance pieces for your home including TasselAire (\$35), Mona Williams Candle (\$35), Agraria Soap (\$20), and Agraria Fragrance (\$40).

Mona Williams
www.monawilliams.com



— 5

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HOLIDAY

Gift Guide

Local Gift Ideas

1. Candy Cane G-String

Fun holiday gift for the sweet man in your life. One size in the traditional red and white striped pattern.

\$15.95

Fantasy Gifts

www.fantasygifts.com



—1

2. John Trones

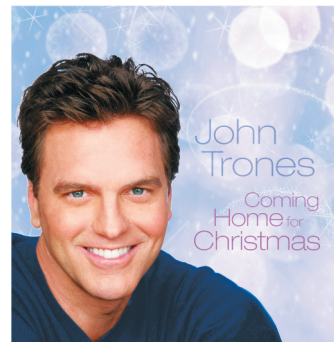
Coming Home for Christmas

Produced by Grammy-nominated artist Jim Brickman, the album features holiday hits old and new along with guest artists Broadway's Jen Burleigh-Bentz, actress/singer Maria Stuke, and Orla Fallon from Celtic Women!

\$12.99

Metropolis Music

www.johntrones.com



—2

3. SWIMS Men's Sport Loafer

A classic water-resistant loafer made in SWIMS' signature rubber, perfect to wear by the sea or on the boat. This loafer has multiple ventilation gills ensuring great comfort and breathability. Pictured in Blue/Navy (more colors available).

\$169

Big Island Swim & Surf

Company

www.bigislandswimandsurf.com



3

4. Parke & Ronen 6" Catalonia Swim Short

The original tailored trunk, great for any holiday getaway, these swim shorts feature a low-rise waist, and full mesh lining. Pictured in Forster Violet.

\$137.50

Big Island Swim & Surf

Company

www.bigislandswimandsurf.com

com



4 —

5. Keisling Glasswürks Handcrafted Bar Ornaments

Give your tree something to say CHEERS! with this holiday season with Keisling Glasswürks handcrafted glass bar ornaments.

\$28 - \$36

Max's

www.stylebymax.com



—5

HOLIDAY

Gift Guide

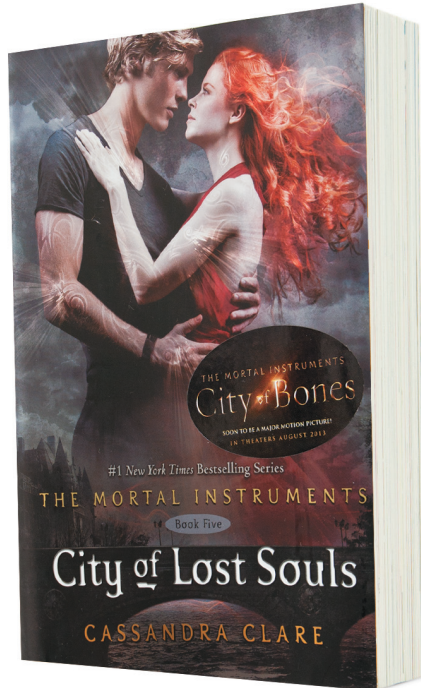
Local Gift Ideas

1. The World of Shadowhunters by Cassandra Clare

For ages 14 and up, there are over 4.5 million copies in print and translated into more than 30 languages. The fifth book of the Mortal Instruments Series, *City of Lost Souls*, features young teenage love and struggles on all levels. Follow Alec (young shadowhunter) along his journey of discovery and love for Magnus (experienced warlock). Love, Blood, Betrayal and Revenge. #1 - *City of Bones*, #2 - *City of Ashes*, #3 - *City of Glass*, #4 - *City of Fallen Angels*. Available in hardcover and paperback.

\$21.99

Amazon.com or local bookstore
www.amazon.com



— 1



— 2



2. You are a Square Hipster & The Original Hipster

Hipzbag is a small bag that carries your cellphone and essentials attached to your body so that you can be hands free. Hipzbag can be worn three ways: with a matching waist strap, patent pending swivel hooks for belt loops, or cross body.

\$24.95 each

Hipzbag
www.myhipzbag.com

3. Official Lipstick of the Minnesota RollerGirls

Four lipstick shades (hot pink, green, orange, and red) were created in partnership with The Elixery Cosmetic House to match the bright team colors of the Dagger Dolls, Garda Belts, Atomic Bombshells, and Rockits. A fifth shade in aqua has been designed in honor of the All-Stars league.

\$20

Elixery Cosmetic House
www.elixery.com



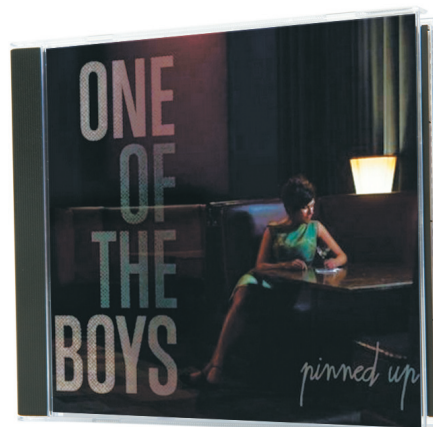
3

4. One of the Boys (featuring Tina Schlieske), Pinned Up

Acclaimed rock-and-roll front woman Tina Schlieske is debuting her newest band, One Of The Boys with a collection of covers by Soul Asylum, Hüsker Dü, The Jayhawks, Prince, The Replacements and Bob Dylan from a uniquely female perspective.

\$9.99

TinaSchlieske.com
www.tinaschlieske.com



— 4

HOLIDAY

Gift Guide

Gift Ideas from

RANDY STERN

1. Nikon 1 V2

For those of us who take photos professionally, we were taken aback by this new development in photo equipment. A mirror-less reflex camera that takes photos on the same level as a DSLR? If you want to dive in, do it!

Nikon

\$799.95, Body Only

www.nikonusa.com

2. Minnesota United FC Season Tickets

So, they play in Blaine. If you can get there for the 2014 NASL season, these guys would love your support. After all, they also support our community! And, it's futbol!

Minnesota United FC

\$50.00 deposit

www.mnunitedfc.com/shop

3. Autobahn Country Club

The next time you are in Chicago, you may want to do an excursion to the southwest past Joliet and partake in the ride of your life. Try the half-day Autobahn experience on their track with your choice of awesome machinery.

Autobahn Country Club

\$579.00

www.autobahncc.com



Bentley Continental GTC. Photo by Randy Stern

4. Sun Country Airlines

We often think of our remaining locally based airline as a low fare vacation hopper. Good thing that they also fly to places where we do business, too. Give the gift of flight!

Sun Country Airlines

Prices Vary

www.suncountry.com

5. Destination XL Gift Card

Gay/Bi men are not of the same cloth. We are also larger. Call us what you will – Bears, Chubs, etc. – we like to look as good as you, too! If we do not fit at mainstream stores, send us there.

Locations in Minnetonka and Roseville

www.destinationxl.com

6. Bentley Continental GTC

The ultimate driving gift. This is a convertible without compromise – available in a V8 or a W12. I described the driving experience in one word as simply “Heaven.”

Bentley Minneapolis or Morrie's Luxury Auto,
Minnetonka

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HOLIDAY

Gift Guide

Gift Ideas from

ELLEN KRUG

Holiday wish list, 2013. Hmmm. Most of my past wishes and gift requests have gone unanswered. Remember last year, when I hoped for something simple like world peace? That was 50,000 dead Syrians, 67 murdered Kenyan mall shoppers, 112 beloved U.S. service members killed in Afghanistan, and God only knows how many perished Pakistanis, Somalis, Koreans, and other human beings, ago. Way to start your holiday column on an upbeat note, Ellie.

On the lighter side, I asked for a funky Room & Board floor light to go with a comfy chair that I planned for the corner of my bedroom. Two immense buildings have gone up across from my building and that bedroom corner is the only place in my condo where I can sit without being seen from outside. I still don't have that light. Nor do I even have the big comfy chair. However, \$1200 later, I now have some new blinds. Problem solved. This year, and with some self-absorption thrown in, I'm still dreaming on both micro and macro levels. So, here goes:



2

1. In the cute and practical category—a Fiat 500. This little baby gets 40 MPG highway and turns heads—including mine—whenever it drives by.
\$16,500
www.fiatusa.com

2. A Samsung Galaxy Note 10.1, 2014 edition. I'm ready to go to a tablet—it's awfully difficult to get that Dell laptop of mine into my purse. Still, I have this habit of buying electronics, only to find that the very next day, they've come out with the newest version. This time, I won't get surprised. 16GB.
Samsung \$549.99
www.amazon.com

3. A return trip to Ptown at the tip of Cape Cod. I went there in September for my first-ever alone trip—where I traveled by myself, solo. It turned out to be quite delightful, in part because I stayed at a wonderful bed & breakfast, the Benchmark Inn. I highly recommend Room 7 on the third floor; it has a spectacular view of Ptown harbor. Price: varies, discounts if booked in advance or off season. Tell Daniel that Ellie sent you; it will make him smile.
www.benchmarkinn.com

4. A lifetime supply of Aquafina Berry Flavor Splash. I like my water sweet, only PepsiCo

(the maker) has either a manufacturing or supply problem—the product has disappeared from just about every grocery shelf. This is highly problematic since plain old water just doesn't do the trick for me. When you can find it:
Lunds or Byerly's \$2.79/six pack
www.aquafina.com

5. A Lammy. Right, I don't ask for much. The problem? Between my columns and my book, I've published nearly 200,000 words. Not to whine, but never has even a single word of mine received even an iota of literary praise. (Ah, Ellie, perhaps there's a reason for

that...) Undaunted, I'm going for the big one—the 2013 Lambda Literary Award for transgender nonfiction with *Getting to Ellen: A Memoir about Love, Honesty and Gender Change*, which will be awarded in June, 2014.
Cost: priceless.
Odds: 200,000 to 1.
Don't bet the bank on it.

6. A United States Congress that knows how to read. Here's a relatively overlooked fact: as part of their swearing in, ever elected member of the House of Representatives and Senate takes an oath to uphold the United States Constitution. This means they're supposed to put

the interests of the country ahead of the Tea Party's interests. It also means that the male Congressmen should have the balls to do the right thing. Enough said. **Price: the future of our country depends on it.**

Have a wonderful holiday season and great 2014, everyone!

Ellie Krug is the author of *Getting to Ellen: A Memoir about Love, Honesty and Gender Change*. She welcomes your comments at ellenkrugwriter@gmail.com

HOLIDAY *Gift Guide*

Gift Ideas from
JUSTIN JONES

What makes gift buying so hard is not knowing how to answer the question, "What do they want?" Ask all you *want* and this is what you'll hear: "Don't worry about it," "I don't need anything," or, my favorite, "I'm sure anything you buy will be great!" Which leaves us educated-guessing, stressing out, and dreading friends' fake excitement when the wrapping paper comes off. Yet we all carry mile-long wish lists, ones we're too polite to share, even when solicited. So for this gift guide, rather than me telling you what I'd buy, I thought I'd demand three of my best friends to "Stop the 'I don't need anything' B.S. and tell me what you want." These are the wish lists of three guys with distinct tastes, maybe similar to friends of your own. Hope this helps you out, and good luck this season!

FOR THE SPORTY PROFESSIONAL

PETER'S PICKS

1. **Elisa Peretti Bean® Cuff Links**
Tiffany & Co.
\$950

Stunning 20mm-wide cufflinks of lapis lazuli to make your coworkers jealous (or to pull in your date for a kiss). Set in sterling silver.

2. **Fitbit Flex Wireless Wristband**
Target
\$100

On trend to become one of the holiday's most popular gifts, the Fitbit tracks every step you take and every move you make to get you in shape. It syncs with your phone, and it's the healthiest stalker you'll ever have.

FOR THE TECHY AUDIOPHILE

WILLIAM'S PICKS

3. **Audio-Technica Headphone**
Best Buy
\$160

For serious music lovers and makers, this is more than a headphone. As part of Audio-Technica's flagship line, with unparalleled sound quality and lush ear padding, this is an experience.

4. **Pebble Wristwatch**
GetPebble.com
\$150

Everyone will have one of these soon, so you might as



5—



6



7



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well get ahead of the game. An exhibition in techno-ingenuity, you'll never have to take your phone out of your pocket—not for controlling your music, starting GPS navigation, or any of the other fancy things smartphones do.

FOR THE BON VIVANT

5. **AllSaints Sylvan Coat**
AllSaints.com
\$490

Fashion-forward, but with timeless appeal, this is a staple in the closets of men who want to stay warm—and trendy. Prato wool with horn buttons, slim fitting and beautifully crafted, this will keep you hot in more ways than one.

6. **Taste: Seasonal Wine Membership**
WineGatherCelebrate.com
\$150 – 6 bottle membership

Be the toast of your inner circle. The Taste package from Share includes six bottles of fascinating, hard-to-find wines from around the world. Seasonal selections curated locally. More packages available.

FOR EVERYONE

Make 'em smile! It makes it all worthwhile, doesn't it, to see someone light up when you surprise them with something they love? There are too many kids, though, who never have even a smile as a gift, who fight every night to stay warm, who are grateful simply for a warm bed, a full stomach, and a clean body. Consider this our #1 pick. The other stuff is just stuff.

7. **United Way Arise Project Donation**
GTCUW.org

Any donation helps
The Arise Project raises money for and provides resources to homeless GLBT youth in the Twin Cities. I implore you, please visit the Arise Project website (they're also on Facebook) to learn more about this epidemic and how you can help.

HOLIDAY

Gift Guide

Gift Ideas from
SHANE LUECK

4

Believe me, I get it. Shopping for my demographic can be difficult. We're picky. Our social group is made up of mostly recent college graduates who can't afford high-end gifts. And we are from a time when the shiniest new version will come along in two weeks, which begs the question: is it worth it? I present to you the wishlist of one young, gay man who likes to think he is on the trendier side yet must remain within a budget. Sound like someone you know? Read on.

1. My Other Bag

An ode to handbags we love, these canvas totes feature images reminiscent of iconic designer handbags. Everyone has their go-to bag, a dream bag. My Other Bag is the perfect complement – carry it in addition to your designer handbag or alone as you tackle your day's To Do list. The grocery store, the gym, errands, or packing for the weekend, it's the perfect other bag. Pictured here, My Other Bag tote pays homage to the Louis Vuitton Neverfull bag.
Mona Williams
\$30
www.monawilliams.com



4. Harding Herringbone Blazer

Every dapper man needs a blazer in his wardrobe, it's just a fact of life. With a cool upscale vibe, the subtle herringbone print on this jacket adds a trend-driven touch to your look. Featuring a mock-neck collar and long sleeves with triple barrel cuffs, feel free to pair this blazer with jeans and your favorite tee, or dress it up with some chinos and a sweater.
G by Guess
\$79.50
www.gbyguess.com

5. Wool Patchwork Throw

This is a bit more on the spendy side, but it goes to a good cause! This throw will provide plenty of chic comfort on those cold Minnesota nights. Hand-knit in varied patterns, the naturally dyed wool features the work of women artisans in the Kathmandu Valley of Nepal working to support their families and to provide their children with an education.
Serrv.org
\$200
www.serrv.org



2. Double-breasted Cardigan

Everyone expects chunky sweaters to pop up this season, but what they don't expect are the details in this one from H&M. Available in three colors, this burgundy version of the mélange wool blend is right on trend for the season. The double-breasted buttons allow you to close the collar and lapel or leave open as your fashion statement entails. Plus, H&M has a long history of running same-sex ads, so the Swedish company has been ahead of the retail game for some time now.
H&M
\$49.95
www.hm.com/us



2

3. Vision Candle Set

This set of twelve unscented candles comes with a message on each candle. From "Believe" to "Love" and "Live" to "Equality," these one word messages are sure to inspire the sentimental in all of us. The set comes with a tweezers to retrieve the charm inside of each candle. Join the fight for equality with proceeds benefitting the Human Rights Campaign.
Human Rights Campaign
\$69
www.hrc.org

3



5



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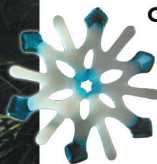
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HOLIDAY *Gift Guide*

Gift Ideas from

ED HUYCK

1. Beatles *On Air – Live at the BBC Vol. 2*

Nearly two decades after the first set was issued – and nearly half a century after they were first aired – several dozen classic tracks performed by the Beatles in their live prime are finally available (legally, at least; bootlegs have been out for decades). Fab Four fans will be thrilled to hear two previously unheard tracks – “I’m Talking About You” and “Beautiful Dreamer” among the tunes here, along with a completely different line up from the first volumes. And to add the fun, there is plenty of between-song banter with the very young and very cheeky quartet. If you missed out on the first set in 1994, a combo box set is also available.

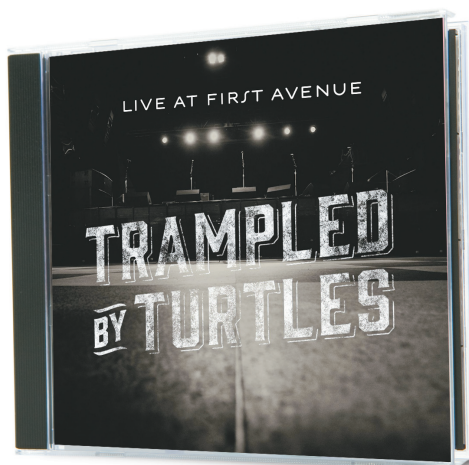
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2. Trampled by Turtles *Live at First Avenue*

Sure, it’s not a single, 30-minute droning solo, but this Duluth-area band celebrates a decade together with a smoking set recorded at the confines of the Minneapolis music mainstay. As the Turtles has pushed at the boundaries of the local scene to become something bubbling up nationwide, they’ve never lost the deep connection with their musical and cultural roots. You can hear live editions of “Wait So Long” and “Alone,” of course, along with more obscure cuts. The band even showcases the full breadth of their influences with a cover of the Pixies “Where Is My Mind?” For the visually inclined, a DVD captures the set (recorded over three nights), while a bundle that includes the DVD, a vinyl copy of the album and a coffee-table book is also available.

2—



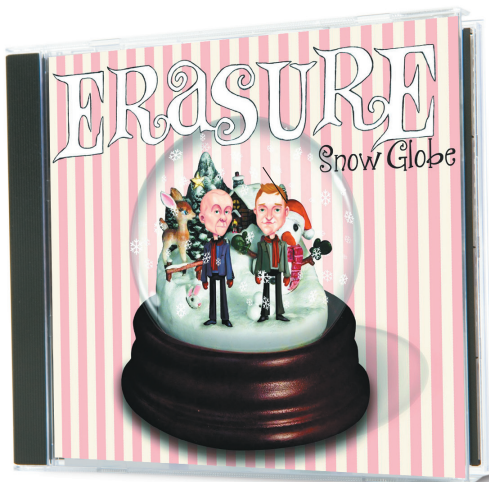
3. Erasure *Snow Globe*

Really, who doesn’t want a collection of seasonal, Christmas and holiday songs from this longstanding British dance-pop duo not named The Pet Shop Boys? The resulting album is a mixed lot of classic holiday tunes (from “Silent Night” to “White Christmas”) to original seasonally themed tracks. The originals are more satisfying here, as the various standards sound forced when rendered in a synth-pop style. When crafting their own music, Andy Bell and Vince Clarke give us a slightly moody rendition of the holiday with tunes like “Blood on the Snow” (which sounds like a track from *A Very Special Fargo Christmas*) and “There’ll Be No Tomorrow,” while even “White Christmas” has more than a touch of menace hiding in its chilly grooves.

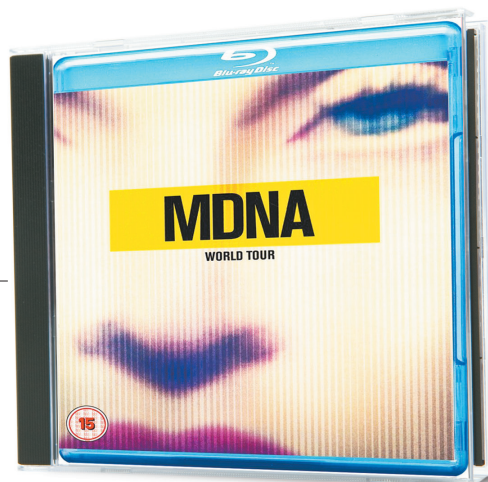
4. Madonna *The MDNA World Tour DVD/Blu-ray*

If you missed Madonna’s last world tour – or just want to revisit the memories – this live concert film will bring it all to life in your living room, den, bed room or wherever you want to enjoy it. Footage is drawn from more than 80 shows from the sold-out tour, employing dozens of cameras to build the perfect audio and visual experience. Both are vital for this tour, as Madonna not only brought the music, but also crafted a visual feast featuring 25 dancers and plenty of stage effects. On the music side, we get an overview of Madonna’s career, from “Papa Don’t Preach” and “Express Yourself” to “Vogue” to “Gang Bang” and “Love Spent.”

3—



4—



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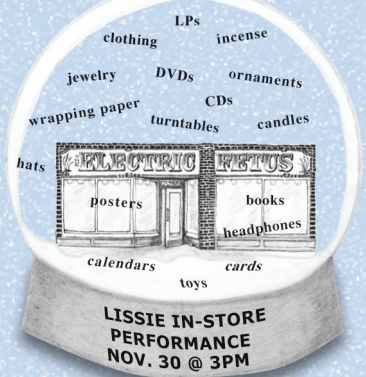
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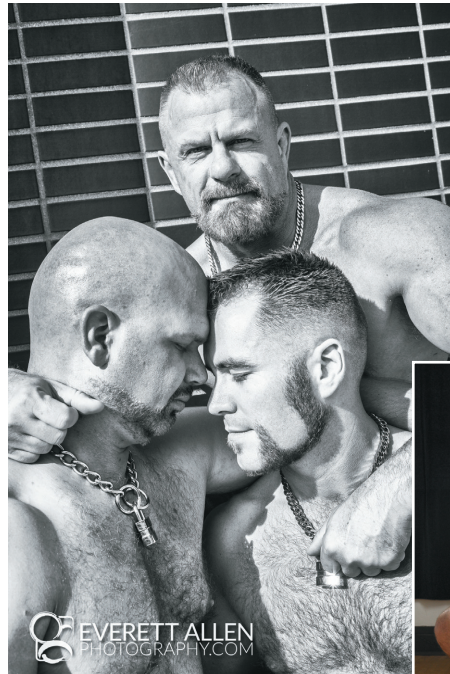
229 Water Street | Excelsior, MN 55331 | 952.923.2464 www.bigislandswimandsurf.com

HOLIDAY *Gift Guide*

Gift Ideas from
STEVE LENIUS

1. Photo Shoot

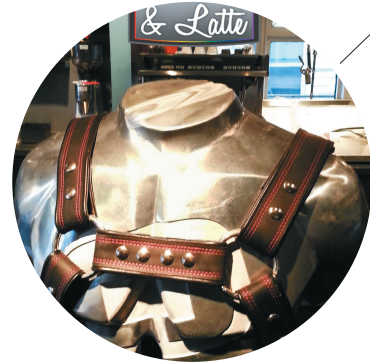
Two gifts in one: photos to treasure and the memorable experience of creating them. Choose photographers Everett Allen (everettallenphotography.com, starting at \$200) or Marlen Boro (marlenboro.com, holiday options start at \$250).



1

2. Custom Leather Harness

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2

3. Leather & Latte Coffee/Espresso Blend

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3

4. Cellblock 13 Fetishwear

Many styles of singlets, underwear and even matching socks. In popular colors including yellow, shown. Socks from \$12, underwear and singlets \$22-\$65. Wide selection at Rainbow Road.



4

5. Leather and Cashmere Flogger

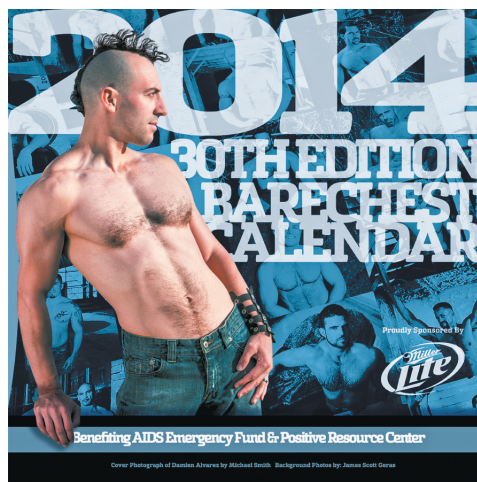
Handmade from leather and luxurious up-cycled cashmere with a solid birch handle. Made in Minnesota by Swoonkink. \$55. Get it at The Smitten Kitten.



5

6. San Francisco Bare Chest Calendar

A 30-year tradition. Thirteen hot men. Calendar is a fundraiser for the AIDS Emergency Fund and Positive Resource Center. \$25 including shipping. www.barechest.org



6





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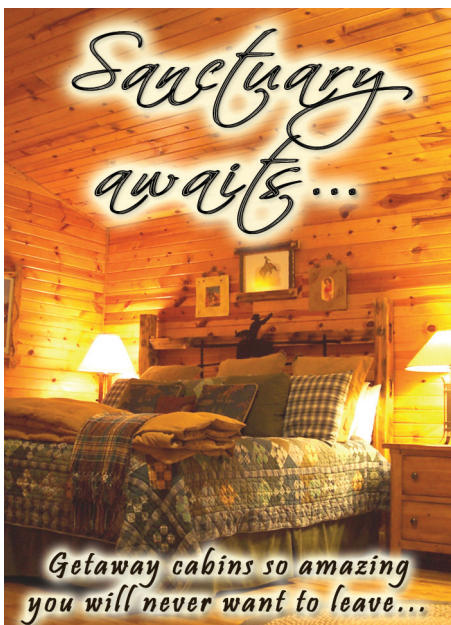
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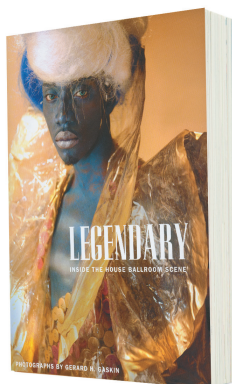
Gift Ideas from

E.B. BOATNER

1. **Legendary: Inside the House Ballroom Scene**

Gerard H. Gaskin
Duke University Press
\$45

Photographer Gaskin's intimate photos from New York, Philadelphia, Richmond and Washington, D.C. initiate the reader into the world of house balls, underground events where predominantly gay and transgender African American and Latino participants, members of particular "houses," compete in pageants and "walks" for trophies based on costume, dance, attitude and "realness."

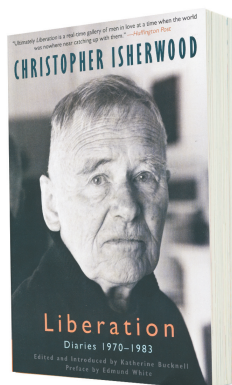


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2. **Liberation: Diaries 1970-1983**

Christopher Isherwood
Harper Perennial
\$19.95

The third, final volume of Isherwood's diaries, focuses on his and partner Don Bachardy's life together. Throughout nearly 700 pages Isherwood bears witness to the advances in gay rights issues in the still closeted years of the twentieth century. There is an informative preface by author Edmund White.

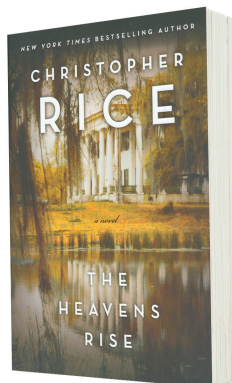


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3. **The Heavens Rise**

Christopher Rice
Gallery Books
\$26

Evil lives and breathes in Rice's chilling portrayal of pre- and post-Katrina New Orleans. An unstoppable horror story that stirs family secrets, forbidden love, class, and race into a cauldron of double, double, toil and trouble, you'll keep reading even as you fear being pulled down into his witches' brew.

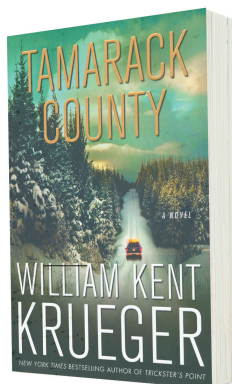


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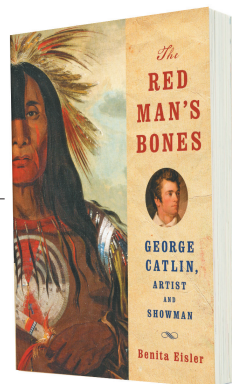
4. **Tamarack County**

William Kent Krueger
Atria
\$24.99

A blizzard howls as sheriff-turned-private investigator Cork O'Connor is called to locate the missing wife of a retired local judge. As always, Krueger has a keen sense of the rugged northern Minnesota terrain and its equally rugged.



—4— 8—



5. **The Red Man's Bones: George Catlin, Artist and Showman**

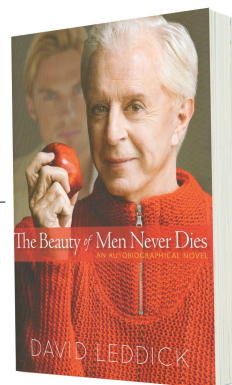
Benita Eisler
W.W. Norton & Company
\$29.95

Often called, "First artist of the West," George Catlin (1796-1872), was not only a superb portraitist of Native Americans, some 600 among 30 Northern Plains tribes, but a showman, huckster and exploiter of the same peoples. Eisler deftly explores the life and shaping of this complex man.

6. **The Beauty of Men Never Dies: An Autobiographical Novel**

David D. Leddick
Terrace Books
\$24.95

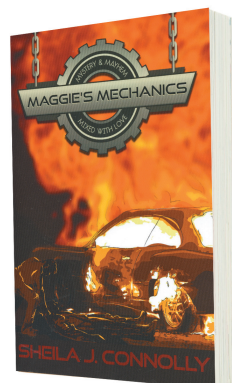
Prolific Leddick—23+ books starting when he was 65—writes here of a gay man's romances in his seventies. Writer, playwright, dancer, he reminds the reader at every turn of the importance of sex, even—or especially—for the septuagenarian. A unique and lively read.



7. **Maggie's Mechanics**

Sheila J. Connolly
Clover Valley Press
\$16.95

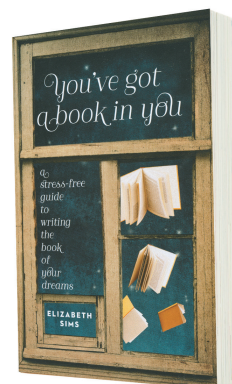
Set in California in the 1980s, Connolly's debut novel features auto mechanic Maggie McIntyre and young Bett Holman who has fallen in love with the older, mysterious Maggie. The book starts explosively—literally—and sweeps the reader along, offering "mystery and mayhem mixed with love."



8. **You Have a Book in You: A Stress-free Guide to Writing the Book of Your Dreams**

Elizabeth Sims
Writers Digest Books
\$19.99

You have a book in you, and author Elizabeth Sims has a number of nifty notions of how to extract it. Or them. Sims encourages, prods, often repeats the phrase "Fun and Easy," and shows the way. The perfect gift for that writer friend.



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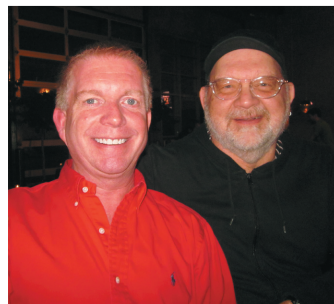
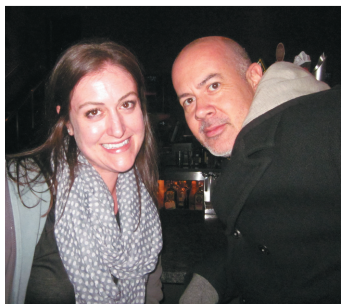
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BIGGAYNEWS FROM HAWAII:

Hawaii Governor To Sign State's Gay Marriage Bill

ABC News reports that Hawaii Governor Neil Abercrombie is expected to sign a bill Wednesday legalizing gay marriage, expanding the state's aloha spirit and positioning the islands for more newlywed tourists. After passing the state Senate with a vote of 19 to 4, cheers broke out both inside and outside the gallery, and with the governor's signature, Hawaii will become the 16th state, including the District of Columbia, to allow same-sex marriage. The passage of the bill is a culmination of over two decades of debate in Hawaii over the gay marriage issue, which began in 1990 when two women applied for a marriage license, setting off a court battle and beginning the national discussion on same-sex marriage.

BIGGAYNEWS FROM WASHINGTON, D.C.:

US Jewish Group Slam Beit Shemesh Mayor Over Anti-Gay Slurs

The Jerusalem Post reports that the mayor of Beit Shemesh is facing blowback from American Jewish groups after calling gays a health problem that needs to be “taken care of”. Mayor Moshe Abutbol had referred to GLBT people as being unholy and impure and thanked God that there were no gays in his city in a television interview earlier in the week, a statement that brought swift retribution from many prominent Jewish leaders and activists. Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League stated: “Expressions of intolerance have no place in Israeli public discourse, especially coming from elected officials. We strongly condemn the insensitive and hurtful comments made by Beit Shemesh’s mayor about his city’s GLBT population.”

BIGGAYNEWS FROM MINNESOTA:

Minnesota House Republican Who Supported Gay Marriage Won't Run In 2014

The *Star Tribune* reports that a Republican state representative who broke with most in her party to support legalizing gay marriage says she won't run for re-election next year. State Representative Andrea Kieffer, Woodbury, said that while she had been honored to serve the people in her district to the office in which she was elected, she never intended for the Legislature to be her career. Representative Kieffer was one of five Republicans who joined Democrats in May to vote in favor of the bill legalizing same-sex marriage in the state.

BIGGAYNEWS FROM NEBRASKA:

Ahmed Mohammed Tuma, Muslim Nebraska Man, Allegedly Attacked Lesbian Sister With A Crowbar

The *Huffington Post* reports that a 20-year-old Muslim man in Nebraska stands accused of a hate crime after allegedly attacking his sister with a crow-

bar because she is a lesbian. Tuma, along with another man, faces charges of attempted assault, criminal mischief and making terroristic threats, all three of which carry a hate crime enhancement. The two suspects allegedly attacked Tuma's sister and her fiancée, and when both women locked themselves inside their car, the men tried to push the vehicle into oncoming traffic. Police say that Tuma believes his sister's relationship with another woman is a disgrace to both their family and to their Muslim beliefs.

BIGGAYNEWS FROM ILLINOIS:

Naomi Jakobsson, Illinois State Representative, Left Her Dying Son's Side To Vote For Gay Marriage Bill

The *Huffington Post* reports that an Illinois state representative made a decision any parent would dread in order to press the “yes” button on legislation she had co-sponsored to legalize same-sex marriage in Illinois. Jakobsson left the bedside of her 46-year-old son who was dying of Pick’s disease in order to make the 90 minute drive to Springfield to cast her vote in favor of allowing same-sex marriage—a vote that was approved with 61 votes, only one more than the minimum that was needed in order to pass. The lawmaker stated that the marriage bill vote was “one that I felt I could not miss and I know my son was proud of my decision.”

BIGGAYNEWS FROM THE UNITED STATES:

General Motors To Offer Benefits To All Gay Married Employees

The *Huffington Post* reports that General Motors made a groundbreaking policy change this week and announced that the company would extend marriage benefits to the spouses of same-sex employees, even if the pair lives in a state where gay marriage isn't legal. The one requirement for the plan, which includes pension, savings and health care plans, is that the couple has legally married in one of the fifteen states where same-sex marriage is recognized. GM's Chief Diversity Officer Ken Barrett stated: "This decision is in line with GM's efforts to find, keep and grow the world's best talent and to offer our employees policies and benefits that are competitive with many of the largest and best-managed industrial companies in the U.S."


BIGGAYNEWS FROM LUXEMBOURG:

European Court: Gay Refugees May Have Grounds For Asylum

Time reports that the European Union's top court ruled Thursday that refugees who face imprisonment for being gay in their home countries might have cause for E.U. asylum. The Court of Justice determined that sexual orientation is "a characteristic fundamental to a person's identity", and that it could be held that laws imprisoning people for such could be deemed as persecution if enforced. Many countries around the world, mostly in Africa and the Middle East, have laws against homosexuality, and could be affected by this.

BIGGAYNEWS FROM SENEGAL:

Five Women Arrested Under Senegal's Anti-Gay Law

ABC News reports that Senegalese police detained five women accused of violating the country's anti-gay law, highlighting increased pressure on suspected lesbians in the deeply homophobic West African nation, an activist group said Tuesday. The women were detained following a birthday party at a restaurant that has been described by Senegalese police as a meeting place for gays and lesbians in Dakar's Yoff district. While arrests of lesbians are not as common as arrests of gay men, it has become a more common occurrence in the heavily Muslim country which criminalizes homosexual acts, and calls for prison sentences of up to five years and fines up to \$3,000 for those found to be "committing an improper or unnatural act with a person of the same sex" 

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Photo by Sophia Hantzes

Quatrefoil Library Moves to Minneapolis

Outstanding GLBT Resource Serves as Community Gathering Space

Marking its 30th anniversary of incorporation as a GLBT nonprofit organization this year, Quatrefoil Library held a grand opening at its fabulous new home in the Spirit on Lake Building in South Minneapolis on November 9.

Ironically, Quatrefoil grew out of a “closeted” collection of books—it originally was in a linen closet at the former St. Paul home of cofounders David Irwin, who died in 2009, and Dick Hewetson. The library opened to the public in 1986 in Minneapo-

lis, moved to St. Paul in 1987, and now has returned to Minneapolis.

According to the library’s website, “The mission of Quatrefoil Library is to collect, maintain, document and circulate gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and queer ma-

terials and information in a safe and accessible space.

“Quatrefoil Library fosters GLBT community, culture and camaraderie through literature and media in a welcoming place. By collecting and lending queer creative output we nurture and cultivate the value of the whole community. We continually strive to integrate our historical presence into new areas as communication and technologies evolve.”

Quatrefoil’s new home allows the library to fulfill its mission even better than it has done so well for nearly three decades. It now has double the space it did at the old facility, including a spacious community room with a conference table that is available to local GLBT groups. Indeed, with its relocation, the library hopes to be what the Twin Cities has never had: a GLBT community center.

As its website points out, “Quatrefoil is one of the few GLBT lending libraries in the country. Our extensive collection includes thousands of books, DVDs, videos, compact disks/audiotapes, newsletters, and periodicals reflecting GLBT and queer experiences. We have Twin Cities, regional, national and international publications.”

For a very affordable annual membership, patrons can check out materials, with the exception of periodicals. Another perk: Show your current membership card for 10 percent off drink/food at Cahoots Coffee in St. Paul, or 50 percent off dessert when purchased with an entrée at Wilde Roast Café in Minneapolis.

A new addition to Quatrefoil’s lineup is Aging Out at the Library: Programming for LGBT Older Adults. Starting in January, Quatrefoil and the Metropolitan Area Agency on Aging will partner to offer Medicare options counseling the first and third Tuesday of each month, 10 AM-2 PM. Longtime Quatrefoil leader Cathy Croghan, who recently was honored with a Lavender Community Award, is spearheading this groundbreaking initiative.

Except for holiday weekends, Quatrefoil is open Monday-Friday, 7-9 PM; Saturday, 10 AM-5 PM; and Sunday, 1-5 PM. Offstreet parking is available to patrons.

What has always impressed me about Quatrefoil is that it’s an entirely volunteer-run organization, with no paid staff. Yet it provides such a marvelous cornucopia of services to our local GLBT community. □

Quatrefoil Library

1220 E. Lake St., Mpls.
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www.qlibrary.org



Photos by George Holdgrafer

Reflections on the State of HIV/AIDS in Minnesota

World AIDS Day is a day to remember. A day to pause in our busy lives and recognize the impact that HIV and AIDS has had on our community. Beginning in the 1980s, Minnesota AIDS Project (MAP) and Clare Housing swiftly responded in the early years of the epidemic. Three decades later, we remain committed to ending this epidemic and providing the services and support needed to those who are affected by HIV/AIDS in Minnesota. We are proud of our histories and honored to follow in the footsteps of those who had the determination and vision to build the two organizations you see in our community today.

We are living at an incredible tipping point in history. The Affordable Care Act aims to bridge the enormous gaps of disparity between the rich, the working class, and the very poor. This Act has ensured that insurance companies cannot deny coverage due to a pre-existing condition like HIV. Also, for the first time in history, there is a National HIV/AIDS Strategy in the U.S. which unifies the efforts of HIV housing, prevention, and supportive services. The Strategy demonstrates federal commitment to reducing new HIV infections, improving health outcomes for people living with HIV, and reducing HIV-related health disparities. Lastly, bio-medical advances in the understanding of the virus have led to incredible successes in treating and preventing the disease.

We are at a place in time where the perfect storm of strategic alignment, good public policy, and effective science are coming together toward eliminating HIV from our communities.

Today, there are 7,500 people living with HIV/AIDS in Minnesota. Clare Housing and Minnesota AIDS Project, along with many other AIDS Service Organizations in our community, continue to play vital roles in fighting the epidemic. As a community, we must work together creatively and

tenaciously to reduce new infections and to advocate for those living with HIV. We must be nimble and flexible to respond to the ever changing funding and political environments in order to empower those who do not have access to health care, housing or services.

The HIV/AIDS fight is far from over. As Minnesota AIDS Project marks its 30th anniversary, and as Clare Housing begins work on a new 36-unit affordable housing building in Robbinsdale, we are committed to working together to end this epidemic and ensure that all people living with HIV/AIDS in Minnesota have access to affordable housing and the services they need to live healthy and productive lives.

HIV IN MINNESOTA – courtesy of the Minnesota Department of Health.

- **One new HIV infection reported nearly every day in Minnesota**
- **Steadily increasing number living with HIV in Minnesota**
- **Disproportionate impact on gay and bisexual men of all races**
- **HIV is heavily concentrated in seven county metro area and yet HIV or AIDS was newly diagnosed in 33 counties throughout in Minnesota last year**
- **Disproportionate impact on communities of color**
- **Disproportionate impact on women of color**

Upcoming Clare Housing and Minnesota AIDS Project Events

Visit Clare Housing by attending a Journey Home program. A one-hour interactive session that demonstrates how affordable



Chuck Peterson of Clare Housing.

housing and supportive services improve the quality of life for people living with HIV/AIDS in the Twin Cities. Dates of upcoming programs:

December 11, 8:00 – 9:00 a.m.

January 8, 5:00 – 6:00 p.m.

Call 612-236-9528 for more information

Minnesota AIDS Project 30th Anniversary Benefit

Thursday, December 5, 6 pm – 8 pm
Cargill Hall Gallery, Minnesota Central Library

Suggested donation: \$100

A benefit celebrating 30 years of progress in HIV prevention, advocacy, awareness and support. Held adjacent to the Cargill Hall Gallery where the Minnesota AIDS Project: 30 Years of Hope gallery exhibit is on view. Speakers include Michael Kaplan, AIDS United; Senator Jeff Hayden; Bill Tiedemann, Minnesota AIDS Project; and Xander Lilly, Positive Leader

2nd Annual World AIDS Day Ball

Presented by Minnesota AIDS Project and Mother Paris Legion
Sunday, December 8, 10 pm (doors at 9 pm)
Honey, Minneapolis \$15 (free with rapid HIV test) More information: knowyourstatustc.org Find out more about World AIDS Day events at the Minnesota Department of Health's website.

Continued on page 77 ➔

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Bill Tiedemann of Minnesota AIDS Project.



HIV Stigma Stops with Me. Photo by Bobby Long



The Lost Art of Stalking

"I know more about you than you know yourself," said the woman sitting across from me at the brunch. She was wearing mirrored sunglasses and had her arm casually slung around the empty chair next to her. The chair was empty because no one in their right mind would sit next to her.

"Then you must know that I am repulsed by people who wear mirrored sunglasses," I said. I don't like looking at myself in the lenses' distorted reflection. It always makes my face look like a Macy's Thanksgiving Day balloon. This is not a good look for me.

She whipped off her glasses and stared at me with a disturbing combination of intensity and hunger. "As I've mentioned, I am not allowed to tell you what I do for a living. But let's just say that I can find out anything about you in a matter of seconds."

"Great. Tell me where I left my favorite coffee mug. It's been lost for a week. And I'm bereft," I said, taking a deep gulp of mimosa and using my eyebrows to frantically signal a SOS to a friend across the patio. But my friend, who was engaged in a lively debate about the pros and cons of keeping goats as pets, paid me no attention.

"How did I get stuck with this lunatic?" I thought to myself. "Why can't I be talking to someone about goats?"

The moment I entered the party, sunglasses zeroed in on me. She glommed onto me like a barnacle and stubbornly refused my efforts to scrape her off.

"She has a crush on you," said the hostess.

"No, she hates me," I said. "There's no other explanation for why she's been torturing me for the past several hours."

Each time I'd escape to a far corner of the party, I'd find her looming behind me, crushing ice loudly with her molars and trying to tantalize me with vague suggestions that she worked as some type of spy. However, I doubt a real CIA agent would be allowed to tell strangers she met at a brunch—and a vegan brunch at that! (this really was the worst party)—that she has "top secret clearance."

"Top secret clearance to what?" I asked. "To the White House powder room? To Candyland? You have been saying a lot of words and not one of them makes any sense."

I should have learned by this point that this weirdo took insults as encouragement.

She pulled out her phone. It was an odd looking device—like a cross between a baby dinosaur and a helicopter. It looked like something a fictional president would use in a 1980s espionage film. She meaningfully punched at it with her thick fingers. After a few moments of making small grunting noises while reading, she looked up at me and grinned aggressively. She then proceeded to read off several nuggets of personal information about me from her James Bond phone. All of which were easily accessible because I have no idea how to set security settings on my Facebook page.

"I'm not impressed. Stalking used to be an art form," I said, shaking my head in disgust. "In my day, you had to perform some serious gumshoeing to dig up information. I can't tell you the number of hours I spent in libraries searching through microfilm to unearth the tiniest detail on a beloved. Microfilm! You had to make a real effort to achieve the level of creepiness you attained by simply turning on a phone."

I grabbed her phone and threw it into the nearby woods. Then I walked across the patio to get in on that conversation about goats.

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Christmas For Loners

It's Christmastime. I'm wearing oversized Halloween pajama pants—orange ones patterned with ghosts—and a 99-cent Santa hat. I spilled sweet and sour sauce on the shirt I was wearing and threw it in the washer. I'm cold without it, but the blanket in my living room feels good on my skin, so I suffer. My apartment smells like the pumpkin spice candle I bought on clearance at Target. I have a \$5 bottle of wine at my side.

I imagine I look like a sad patchwork doll, a skinny, shirtless, drunken Ragged Andy tossed onto a couch, abandoned and unwanted.

This is me at 27. When I was younger, I imagined I'd be a dad when I was 27. I imagined that on Christmas I'd be assembling some impossibly intricate tricycle for my daughter. Instead, I'm alone in the dark, watching muted Christmas movies, listening to Sinatra, eating the Number Nine Special from Chinatown Takeout.

I live in Loring Park, just a couple of blocks away from horse-drawn carriages, in walking distance to department store winter wonderlands, and moments from families enjoying Holidazzle. The world around me is abuzz with holiday cheer and winter romances. I'm sick with envy.

My mind drifts away and my ex-boyfriend, Bradley, is kissing me. He's the only man I've ever loved. He tells me that I'm beautiful, that he's lucky. I feel him caress my face with those rough hands of his. I'm lost in his blue eyes. I smell him. I feel safe in his arms.

He fades away. The reverie is a painful one.

I stand up and walk into my kitchen for a cookie—I have a dozen chocolate chip from

Lund's. I stick one in the microwave and pour myself a glass of milk. I jump up on my countertop and look around my apartment. It looks untouched, devoid of personal affects, which is the way I wanted it—I wanted to avoid anything sentimental around my house, afraid that any warmth would make me want more. My friends and acquaintances call it gorgeous. I call it soulless.

My mind wanders again and my concrete floors transform into carpet, a Christmas tablecloth covers my dining table, and on it, ham, turkey, candied yams, and apple pie. Friends and family fill my apartment and everyone is busy, fussing, laughing, gossiping. Kids surround a Christmas tree and beg to open presents. And there's a man, whose face I can't make out, standing in front of me, his hands around my waist, pressing his lips onto mine.

The microwave beeps, the mirage dissolves, and my rigid apartment reappears. This? This is my home?

With the exception of my Aunt Barbara, my friends are all I have. My friends are my family, but it's not the same around the holidays. They have families of their own—real families. They fly away for Christmas. I stay here.

I'm single with no family. I'm unwanted and pathetic.

I break down. My cheeks start throbbing, my face turns red. I'm not cold anymore. I'm hot. I'm burning up. My body's on fire. My nose runs. Tears well up and I can't see through them. I feel sick to my stomach. My ears tingle. My fingers numb. I want to scream. I'm going to explode.

I hold my stomach, trying to gut out my

pain, but can't. I run to my back door. I run outside into the snow, barefoot. I'm dying, drowning and burning all at once. I need to breathe. I need fresh air.

In stereotypically Hallmark form, snow is falling. I see smoke from a chimney down the street. Fuck. I can't get away from it, all this "joy." It's all around me and I have none. I clench my hands into fists so hard my palms feel like they'll bleed. I scream as loud as I can. I scream so loudly my voice loses sound. I want to throw up. The cold air stings when I inhale.

And then I stand there, panting, watching my breath in the cold, feeling helpless, hopeless, defeated.

Light from my apartment spills onto the snow. It looks colder inside than it feels out here. I don't want to go back. I want to run away.

My feet feel frost bitten, and I have no choice. I make my way inside to suffer out another season, to hope that next year will be different.

I usually write about happy endings in this column, but today I don't have one to offer. I could bullshit some sappy inspirational message, but that'd be condescending and disingenuous. I'm writing this to those of you who are like me, alone over the holidays, who wish we weren't.

No, I cannot offer a happy ending. I can offer only my companionship, my solidarity. And I mean that. You aren't alone. You've got me. We've got each other. And we have cell phones. Which means we also have access to the Number Nine Special from Chinatown Takeout. □



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KETEL ONE Vodka. Distilled from Wheat. 40% Alc/Vol.
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